



## Amal chief warns of major Israeli attack

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanon's parliament speaker warned Saturday that Israel might resort to major military operations on the last active Arab-Israeli war front in South Lebanon to try to break a deadlock in Middle East peace talks and to punish opponents of the peace process.

Nabih Berri, who also is leader of the pro-Syrian Amal movement fighting Israeli occupation forces in the south, said Israel may go to war to make up for losses in the fight against the hardliners.

Mr. Berri's warning came amid anxiety in Lebanon that Israel might use its military superiority to avenge last Sunday's suicide bombing that killed 21 Israelis and wounded more than 60 north of Tel Aviv. Most of the victims were soldiers.

The Palestinian group Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the bombing.

Speaking at a medical conference in the southernmost port city of Tyre, Mr. Berri said Israel had failed to impose a settlement on Syria and Lebanon and was unsuccessful in neutralising Egypt in the Arab-Israeli talks.

"Faced with all these failures, particularly the security ones, Israel is looking for a soft belly to launch a war," Mr. Berri said.

Mr. Berri did not say when or what form Israel's retaliation would take, but he indicated the Jewish state might invade.

The Shiite Muslim leader said Israel was mistaken for presuming that Lebanon "would be an easy arena for its invasions." Any attack would be a failure like previous ones, he added.

Guerrillas of Amal and the

## Ross sees good chance for peace progress

NEW YORK (USIA) — The Middle East peace process, in the year ahead, has a good chance to build on the positive advances made in 1994. If Israelis and Palestinians address security concerns, economic aid becomes more effective, and both sides build mutual confidence, says Dennis Ross, U.S. special Middle East coordinator.

Speaking January 16 to the New York Foreign Policy Association, Mr. Ross pointed to what he called the "quite extraordinary" changes in attitude and concrete actions that made 1994 a "landmark" year in the Middle East. In order to carry that progress further in 1995, he said, the region faces broad challenges in three areas: Israeli/Palestinian negotiations, Israeli/Syrian talks, and overall regional normalisation.

Mr. Ross stressed that the progress made in 1994 has not removed "all the vestiges of the past," and he cited the January 22 terrorist bombing in Israel as "a very clear reminder" of that.

The more the opponents of the peace treaty see progress "the more desperate they become... to prevent the future from going forward," he said.

"Our challenge is to overcome them. Our challenge is to shape the new Middle East, to cement the new Middle East and assure the participants that we are beginning to see change actually have a chance to emerge and flourish and become institutionalised."

One of the major challenges in 1995 is for Israelis and Palestinians to see and feel tangible results from the compromises both have made in Israel in hopes of gaining security and Palestinians in hopes of gaining control of the key economic and political decisions that affect their lives, Mr. Ross said.

"The Israelis are going to have to feel secure and the Palestinians are going to have to do everything they can to contribute to that," the ambassador said. "No one can expect the Palestinians to provide absolute security. What one has to see is not 100 per cent success, one has to see 100 per cent effort."

In the areas where the Palestinian Authority has control, it has to do everything it can to root out those who threaten violence against Israelis.

The Palestinians, for their part, Mr. Ross said, have to see their political and economic life change, including the development of institutions, the rule of law, and elections. That will build the credibility of the Palestinian Authority in the eyes of the Palestinians and demonstrate that the process is moving forward and they have a stake in the peace process, he said.

For economic change in the Palestinian territory, both the international donors and the Palestinians "are going to have to do better than they have done," he noted.

"Donors internationally are going to have to streamline how they approach Palestinian assistance. We are going to have to do a better job of targeting the assistance, making certain it has an impact, responding to critical areas where change has to take place and assuring overall that Palestinians see and hear and are aware of the real impact of the assistance."

But the Palestinians also have to do a better job, Mr. Ross said. "They have to remove the bottlenecks and make it possible for projects to get launched. They have to empower the people in the Palestinian Authority to make the decisions that make it possible for the assistance to move."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Nateq Nuri says he could run for president

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq Nuri said he is willing to run for the presidency in the next election in 1997, the daily Salam reported Saturday. "If the Association of the Militant Clergy (AMC) nominates me, I will take on the job," the speaker told a religious group in the holy city of Qom in central Iran. "I am a member of the group and subordinate to its decision." The AMC is an influential conservative political and religious organisation which has a say in the nomination of top officials in Iran. The group, close to the powerful merchant class of the bazaar, sidelined the Islamic hardliners from power in the last parliamentary elections in 1992 and presently dominates the country's legislative and executive branches. Mr. Nateq Nuri said however that the outcome of the next parliamentary elections in 1996 would have a "direct impact" on the presidential elections, scheduled for June 1997. He did not elaborate.

### Qadhafi: Combining politics, religion is profane

CAIRO (AP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi has attacked those who mix politics and religion, saying merging the two is profane. In a speech broadcast by Libyan state television Friday, Colonel Qadhafi cited Iran as a country that exploited religion for political purposes and said such actions lessen the meaning of religion. "God is remote from politics. The Koran is remote from politics," Col. Qadhafi said in the speech monitored by the BBC. "The angels have nothing to do with politics, and the day of judgment has nothing to do with politics. If you merge religion into politics it no longer remains religion. It becomes a profane action." He was addressing local leaders in Al Khum on the Mediterranean coast. It was unclear what prompted Col. Qadhafi's attack. He has criticised Islamic extremists in the past — once calling Muslim radicals part of a U.S. plot to control the Arab World — but he also declared Islamic law to be the basis of Libya's legal system.

### 'Alexander the Great buried in desert temple'

CAIRO (AFP) — Greek archaeologists have found two documents at a temple in Egypt's western desert saying that Alexander the Great was buried at the site, antiquities officials said Saturday. Abdul Halim Nureddin, chairman of the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation, went to the temple of the oracle of Ammon in the Siwa oasis, 750 kilometres west of Cairo, to examine the claims, officials at his office said. The temple was built in 1100 B.C. according to a report in Saturday's edition of the government daily Al-Ahram. However, Jean-Pierre Cortegiani of the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology was sceptical about the theory, saying the Egyptian press frequently claimed the tomb of the Macedonian conqueror had been found. "All the texts we have show that Alexander was buried in Alexandria and Roman emperors passing through regarded it as their duty to pay homage," he told AFP. George Kypros, head of the Greek cultural centre in Alexandria, also said he had "no information yet that the tomb of Alexander the Great has been discovered at Siwa." Alexander the Great, who was crowned in the Temple of the oracle Ammon in 330 B.C. after conquering Egypt in 333 B.C., died in Babylon in 323 B.C. at the age of 33 and his body was brought to Egypt for burial.

### Lockheed pleads guilty of bribery

ATLANTA (AP) — Aerospace contractor Lockheed Corp. pleaded guilty Friday to bribing an Egyptian legislator and was fined \$24.8 million for violating the federal Corrupt Practices Act. The move allowed Lockheed to avoid a trial the government said would have disclosed how the company paid about \$1 million to influence the sale of cargo planes to the Egyptian government. The charges concern a 1989 contract, valued at about \$79 million, for three C-130 Hercules transport planes. Calabasas, California-based Lockheed has a major manufacturing plant in suburban Atlanta, which builds the Hercules. The government accused Lockheed and some of its executives of using the influence of Leila I. Takla, a member of the Egyptian People's Assembly from 1987 to 1990, to persuade Egypt to buy three C-130s in the late 1980s. While serving in the assembly, Ms. Takla, who previously had been a paid consultant for the company, continued to receive a retainer fee and do work for Lockheed, the government charged. Lockheed also was accused of covering up the relationship.

### Iran demands rapid shipment of rice

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has urged Thailand to speed up the shipment of 250,000 tonnes of rice it bought last October, Iran's official news agency IRNA said Saturday. The request was conveyed to the Thai Commerce Ministry by the Iranian embassy in Bangkok on Friday, it said. Tehran purchased the rice for an estimated \$75 million and a first shipment was to be delivered in November, according to Iranian sources. IRNA did not specify the cost, but said half of it had been paid in cash and the rest on credit. Iran produced 1.8 million tonnes of rice in 1994, but it still had to import 200,000 tonnes of the product from Thailand to meet domestic needs.

### New head of Air Algerie named

ALGIERS (AFP) — National carrier Air Algerie named Hamed Bencherchali as its new managing director, news reports said Saturday. Mr. Bencherchali replaced Chakib Bellili, who was dismissed Tuesday along with other senior officials in the wake of the Dec. 24 hijacking of a French Airbus at Algiers airport by fundamentalist guerrillas. A retired colonel, Mr. Bencherchali was director of external relations at the Defence Ministry. A commission of inquiry in the hijacking, which led to the deaths of three passengers as well as the four attackers, concluded that grave negligence on the part of senior aviation and security officials had been a factor in the incident.

## PLO aide decries stalemate in peace process

By George S. Hishmeh

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The chief representative of the Palestine Liberation Organisation here told a Washington audience Jan. 26 that the Middle East peace process is at its "lowest point" since the signing of the September 1993 Declaration of Principles accord between Israel and the PLO at a White House ceremony.

Hassan Abdul Rahman explained that in the wake of recent Israeli policies, particularly on the question of settlements in the West Bank, "average" Palestinians are losing faith in the process.

"Unless it becomes a viable process that transforms the realities on the ground they do not see why they have to support it," he said. He said peace cannot be achieved between PLO leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin alone. Peace, he continued, will ultimately have to be between the Israeli and Palestinian people.

"Unfortunately," he added, "we do not see at this end in Washington a serious effort to correct the deficiencies in this process."

Acknowledging that the achievements to date in the peace process are irreversible, Mr. Abdul Rahman, nevertheless, expressed fear that if the present stalemate continues, the process may face "derailment, if not stagnation."

He attributed the problem to Israeli "vacillation" as in the case of the settlements and urged them to take "a second look" at the peace process. He recalled it was the PLO understanding that Israel recognised in the Oslo agreement that the process will lead in the end to a two-state solution.

He said Prime Minister Rabin missed an opportunity after the Hebron massacre last February of some 30 Palestinians by an Israeli zealot to deal with the settlements issue which, at present, is exacerbating the ongoing negotiations.

## Amman workshop studies solutions to problems facing businesswomen

By Rana Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on Saturday opened a three-day workshop on "project planning" aimed at strengthening small enterprises and their employees' performance.

Economical expert Yousef Toumma told the workshop that there were four main obstacles facing women who want to establish their own enterprises or women who currently own small businesses. These included marketing, credit facilities, business counselling and legal matters and training.

Eighteen representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local institutions and semi-government institutions have been divided into four groups to tackle the four major areas.

"The participants will discuss in the next two days these problems," that are

standing as an obstacle for women in their enterprises, and come up with solutions," a UNIFEM spokeswoman told the Jordan Times.

By and large some of the problems are common to both men and women entrepreneurs, but women face more difficulties than men while tackling them.

The participants reviewed a list of obstacles facing women operating or trying to establish a new business.

In marketing, women entrepreneurs faced unfair competition, limited creativity, improper business location, mobility constraints, negative market climate, and lack of adequate information.

Credit problems facing women include collateral requested by lenders, lack of confidence in women and the lack of the "cultural courage" to have separate bank accounts or significant savings, lack of adequate capital to develop a project, and women's lack of awareness concerning sources of finance

and banking procedures.

In the training sector, participants discussed the shortcomings in available training services and long training courses which do not suit entrepreneurs.

In legal matters, the obstacles cited as facing women included rules and regulations, customs duties levied on intermediate goods, licensing procedures which may be costly and time consuming, lack of clear classification of enterprises, and rigid interpretation of laws by some officials.

At the end of the three-day meeting, the participants will list suggested resolutions to these problems and set up the agenda for UNIFEM activities for the year 1995.

Established in 1976, UNIFEM provides direct technical and financial support for low-income women in developing countries. It also funds activities that bring women's programmes which promote the inclusion of women in decision-making.

## Five planeloads of Indian-donated relief supplies destined for Iraq

By Cathy King  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The first of five shipments of emergency medical supplies from India will be dispatched to Iraq today from Amman, India Humanitarian Initiative (IHI) Chairman and Member of Parliament John Joseph said Sunday.

The first consignment consisting of about 26 metric tonnes — three truck loads — of "life-saving medicines" was due to arrive on a Royal Jordanian flight from Bombay Sunday evening. Trucks arranged by Iraq would carry the cargo by road to Baghdad, said Mr. Joseph, who is also a member of the National Commission for Minorities in India.

Member of Parliament Sheikh Mohammad Lal Jan Basha and journalist George Varghese, both members of IHI, will accompany Mr. Joseph and the cargo of 15 tonnes of medicines donated by 25 pharmaceutical companies to Baghdad.

The medicine will be handed over to the Iraqi Ministry of Health for distribution. Mr. Varghese told the Jordan Times.

The majority of the supplies are medicines for children, those used for anaesthesia and even threads for stitching after surgery. These items were identified as priorities during an Indian government delegation to Iraq last April, Mr. Varghese said.

Sheikh Mohammad, Mr. Joseph and Mr. Varghese were among the delegation sent as emissaries of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to secure the release of a young Indian from an Iraqi jail at that time, they said.

"The sufferings of the people moved us," Mr. Varghese said, adding that Sheikh Mohammad, during his visits to mosques in Baghdad, was approached by many pleading for assistance.

Mr. Joseph said that on return to India the delegation reported the "grave and pathetic" situation there to the prime minister.

Upon the request of Mr. Rao, the 51-strong IHI began collecting donations of medical relief. Mr. Joseph added, IHI is comprised of parliament members and officials.

The Indian team said more than 400,000 Iraqis were suf-

fering from diseases related to malnutrition and a "large number of deaths" reported daily are due to a lack of medicines and food.

The three member team will be joined shortly by Members of Parliament G.M.C. Balagovi, another IHI representative who was also among last year's delegation.

The initiative took six months to set up, during which time operations ceased temporarily because of a plague that swept some parts of India in the summer, Mr. Joseph said.

Following the resumption of arrangements, a further three months were dedicated to collecting medical supplies, he added.

Objections raised by the United States and Britain led the U.N. Security Council sanctions committee to disallow many items that the Iraqis need, Mr. Joseph said. These included bedding for hospitals, tyres and spare parts, soap, blankets, pesticides, electric lights, fishing nets, paints, nails and cooking utensils.

(Continued on page 7)

## Hizbollah leaders urge sanctions against U.S.

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Hardliners targeted by U.S. President Bill Clinton's recent decision to freeze U.S.-based assets of groups are urging Arabs and Muslims to impose their own economic sanctions on the United States.

In a Friday sermon at a south Beirut mosque, Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, spiritual guide of the Hizbollah group, criticised Mr. Clinton's move against 12 groups and 18 individuals in the United States.

"America has declared war on Israel for the sake of Jews," Sheikh Fadlallah said, according to excerpts published Saturday in newspapers.

"All Arabs and Islamic countries, organisations and individuals should promptly withdraw their assets in the United States," he added.

The appeal was apparently aimed primarily at Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich Gulf Arab states with huge assets in U.S. treasury bonds and bank accounts.

Sheikh Fadlallah and Hizbollah, who both champion Iran's fiery brand of Shiite Muslim fundamentalism in Lebanon, were included in Mr. Clinton's sanctions. A militant Jewish group, Kach, was also on the list.

Mr. Clinton imposed the measures Monday, accusing the militant Arab factions of disrupting Middle East peace efforts by killing 52 Israelis in the last four months.

Sheikh Fadlallah said none of the Islamic factions or individuals targeted by sanctions maintains any U.S. bank account.

"I never in my life put a single cent in an American bank," he said, adding that Arab and Muslim nations should boycott U.S. goods they can live without.

Hizbollah's secretary-general, Hassan Nasrallah, said in a separate speech at a rally in south Beirut Friday that Arab and Muslim states should draw up a boycott list of "American organisations and individuals known for their support of Israel."

Mr. Clinton ordered the sanctions after last Sunday's suicide bombing attack which killed 20 Israelis and wounded more than 60 north of Tel Aviv. Most of the victims were soldiers.

Sheikh Nasrallah said Israel should have been made to suffer sanctions for its July 1993 bombardment of southern Lebanon, in which 150 civilians were killed.

"All Arabs and Muslims, individuals, groups or states should stop placing funds at any American bank or institution because (America) is not a country that safeguards people's money... and it betrays the trust," Sheikh Fadlallah said.

"We can invest our money in Europe and other countries," added Sheikh Fadlallah, one of 18 individuals in Mr. Clinton's list suspected of involvement in Middle East "terrorism."

"When one looks at this decision he cannot but scoff at its because most of the groups and individuals mentioned do not have bank accounts in America as it is not trustworthy," the bearded black-turbaned cleric said.

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

### JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 ..... Coonies Minutes  
17:30 ..... Que Le Michel Gagne  
18:00 ..... Montage  
18:30 ..... Le Monde Fantastique Des Enfants  
19:00 ..... News In French  
19:15 ..... Ushuaia  
19:30 ..... Galaxies  
20:15 ..... The Naony  
20:45 ..... The Album Show  
21:30 ..... Heartbeat  
22:00 ..... News In English  
22:30 ..... Feature Film: "Blind Sport"  
23:00 ..... The Hidden Room

### PRAYER TIMES

05:07 ..... Fajr  
06:28 ..... (Sunrise) Dhuhr  
11:48 ..... Dhuhr  
17:10 ..... Maghrib  
18:20 ..... 'Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Sweetside, Tel. 810740  
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 627285  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590  
Church of the Association Tel. 627440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622266  
Church of the Association Tel. 623341  
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331  
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The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

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Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 77133



Her Majesty Queen Noor on Saturday shakes she paid to the town to review development hands with children in Jerash, during a visit projects (photo by Crystal)

## Queen visits NHF centres in Jerash, looks in on tourism services, sites

AMMAN (J.T.) — On a routine visit to Jerash to review the progress of local handicrafts production and training centres, Her Majesty Queen Noor stopped at the city's archaeological sites and checked on the visitor's centre and other tourism services, according to a Royal Court statement.

Queen Noor was received by Minister of Tourism Abdul Ilah Al Khatib, French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Bajole and the director-general of the Department of Antiquities, with whom she discussed ways to improve the conditions of archaeological sites and to better organise tourism reception facilities and the handicrafts zone, the statement said.

Queen Noor, said the statement, visited the Rimoun Weaving Centre, which was established by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation's (NHF) Jordan Design and Trade Centre (JDTC) two years ago to help local women acquire skills and training to generate income and improve their living conditions, while reviving traditional Jordanian handicrafts.

The JDTC introduced an important innovation at the centre — two-metre-wide looms, used to weave room-size carpets, previously absent from the Jordanian market. The profit-making centre has since become independent, and is locally operated and managed.

At the centre, the Queen congratulated the craftspeople for their innovative high quality products, which are marketed by the JDTC in Jordan and abroad, and appear in mail-order catalogues. Queen Noor also distributed certificates to graduates of the training course, the statement added.

Later, the statement said, Queen Noor toured the Jerash Handicrafts Centre, which provides training and employment opportunities in sewing, weaving and embroidery to local women. Operated by the Jerash Ladies Benevolent Society, an independent non-governmental organisation, the centre is the largest employer in Jerash, contributing to the development of local families and to the preservation of a unique aspect of Jordan's national heritage.

The JDTC has been working closely with the centre since 1988 to assist in technical and management training, product development and both local and international marketing, which has expanded the centre's business by professionalising its operations, re-directing designs to make products more marketable, and opening up new markets.

Queen Noor was received by the governor of Jerash. She was accompanied by members of the NHF Executive Committee, Mrs. Noor Izzedine, and Mrs. Subhieh Ma'ani, and the director of the JDTC, the statement said.

## Princess Basma opens workshop on gearing women towards political life

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday opened a three-day workshop to help women enter political life by urging women to participate in national political endeavours regardless of their modest experience.

Addressing the opening session, the Princess said that women can play a basic and important role in the political dimension of the national construction process and in the achievement of national goals.

Princess Basma urged women to adopt attitudes and utilise other persons' experiences on the basis of concepts and ideas emanating from the Arab and Islamic culture.

She told the audience that women should benefit from the present and other similar workshops in order to better deal with political issues in the future.

David Burton, director of the British Council in Amman, which organised the

workshop in cooperation with the National Committee for Jordanian Women's Affairs, addressed the meeting stressing that Jordan was at the forefront among countries that respect women's freedom.

He said the present workshop serves as an opportunity for the exchange of views and experiences among the participants.

Leslie Abdullah, head of a working group for change in the United Kingdom, said that the meeting will discuss how women's voices will be heard on the political scene.

She said the past decade witnessed a resurgence of women's participation in the political domain in western Europe and North America.

The participants to the workshop will learn how to give successful interviews to the media, how to induce change in society and communicate ideas, and how to present short speeches.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma advise women on how to prepare for opens a three-day workshop designed to political involvement (Petra photo)

## Text of Jordan-PNA trade agreement

AMMAN (J.T.) — Following is a translation of the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement on trade.

In implementation of the General Agreement signed by the Jordanian government and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) on Jan. 26, 1995, the two sides agree on the following:

Article one: A) In reaffirmation of their commitment towards working within the principle of free trade to ensure the flow of goods and services between them, including agricultural products, and with a view to achieving that goal, national goods will be exempt from customs duty and all other fees and taxes when they are exchanged between the two parties, with the exception of the sales tax which is imposed in Jordan and the value added tax imposed by the Palestine National Authority.

B) To achieve that goal the two sides will meet every six

months to agree on lists of goods to be exchanged between them under paragraph (A), with a view to increasing the number of items in this category gradually until complete liberalisation of trade between the two sides is achieved.

C) The two sides will facilitate the exchange of national commodities and services without exception, to include all commodities in paragraph (B), on condition that they be subjected to taxes still levied on them by either side.

Article two: The two sides will set up a joint ministerial committee to follow up the implementation of the agreement and endorse detailed measures to be applied in matters concerning trade and customs tariffs for the purpose of facilitating the goods and services to and from either side. The services will include expertise and required cadres involved. The committee is to meet at least once every three months or

whenever the need arises.

Article three: Upon the signing of this agreement the two sides will form teams of experts to study the procedures that will enable the various articles to be implemented, taking care not to impinge on the rules in force by Jordan and the PNA. The experts will submit a report on their work to the joint committee for endorsement.

Article four: In view of the importance of transit trade to the two sides, the parties agree on the necessary procedures to facilitate and organise transit trade by land, sea and air, in accordance with a transit agreement that will be reached between them.

The two sides will give due importance and urgency to the matter of reconstructing bridges on the Jordan River between the West Bank and Jordan to facilitate transit trade.

Article five: With regard to agricultural products:

a) The committees formed by the two sides will work out a timetable for the exchange of these products.

b) The Jordanian government will facilitate the export of Palestinian agricultural products through Jordanian territory under the transit deal.

Article six: The two sides will start conducting economic, technical and legal studies and organise the joint free zone in the Jordan Valley for the purpose of storing and marketing different products produced or manufactured by either side.

Article seven: The two sides agree to secure part or all the requirements of oil products needed by the Palestinian side under a bilateral protocol to be organised by the PNA and the Jordanian Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company.

Article eight: The two sides agree to secure part of or all the requirements of cement and iron used in construction needed by the Palestinians in accordance with arrangements to be agreed on by Jordan and the PNA.

Article nine: The two sides agree to begin a study on linking the power grids of the two sides.

Article ten: This agreement is to be applied on trade exchanges between Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Article eleven: Upon endorsement by both sides, this agreement will go into effect immediately.

The agreement was signed by Minister of Industry and Trade, Ali Abul Ragheb for Jordan and PNA Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Ahmad Qourcra.

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## Ecuador declares emergency over border clashes with Peru

QUITO (AFP) — Ecuadorian President Sixto Durán Ballén declared a national state of emergency and military mobilisation after a series of clashes with Peru along a long-disputed stretch of Amazon border.

In a nationwide broadcast late Friday, Mr. Durán Ballén accused Peru of attacking Ecuadorian border outposts and said fighting had been taking place "all day" in the region.

"In accordance with my responsibilities towards the country and the people of Ecuador and in line with Ecuador's unwavering commitment to peace, I was forced to declare a national state of emergency and mobilisation in a decree that was signed today by the government," Mr. Durán Ballén said.

At the same time Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori flew to the town of Tumbes, about 50 kilometres from the border, where Peruvian forces have set up their command post, officials in Lima said.

They said Fujimori discussed the situation with senior military commanders there. There were no further details.

Peru and Ecuador have

disputed the oil and mineral rich region along their border for more than 50 years, with the last major outbreak of fighting occurring in 1981.

The latest troubles began with Peruvian reports that an Ecuadorian helicopter attacked a border post inside Peru late Thursday, and Ecuadorian troops attacked forces inside its territory the same day.

Ecuadorian officials said one soldier had been hurt when Peruvian forces attacked an Ecuadorian border post early Friday.

There had already been two incidents in the region earlier this month.

Mr. Durán Ballén, who appeared on television flanked by parliamentary speaker Heinz Moeller and Supreme Court Chief Justice Miguel Macías, accused Mr. Fujimori of ordering the Ecuadorian army to "be removed from Ecuadorian territory."

And he warned that if Peru's forces continued, it would provoke a "large-scale confrontation" between the two Andean nations.

He said that Peruvian attacks had occurred in the regions of Cueva de Las Tallos and that the military detachments of Teniente

Ortiz and Elsa had been fighting "all day."

"Our armed forces have stood firm in accomplishing their sacred mission and have earned the faith and the affection of the entire people," he said.

There was no immediate official reaction in Lima to the emergency declaration.

But former U.N. Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuellar, who is running for the Peruvian presidency, accused Ecuador of aggression and called on the government to take firm action against its northern neighbour.

Peru and Ecuador both rushed reinforcements to the border area and the violence prompted international efforts to begin a dialogue on the dispute.

In Lima, the Peruvian High Command earlier denounced Ecuador's "aggression" and said its forces had been ordered to refrain from crossing the border or taking actions that would escalate tensions.

A military source in Peru said hundreds of troops were flown to Tumbes on civilian and military aircraft Friday.

General José Villamil, Ecuador's army chief of staff, said reinforcements had been sent to the border area.

The area where the fighting flared is a stretch of border along the Condor Mountain range that was the object of a 1942 agreement reached in Rio de Janeiro, under pressure from the United States, following a 1941 Peruvian invasion of the region.

The 1942 Rio protocol gave international recognition to some territories acquired by Peru during its invasion of Ecuador in 1941.

Quito rejected the protocol, which cost it 200,000 square kilometres (77,225 square miles) of land, in 1960. The losses included a Pacific coastal province, an area in the mountains including the town of Jaen, and a large area in the Amazon River basin.

Ecuadorian maps still show the disputed areas as part of the national territory.

The four guarantors of the accord — the United States, Brazil, Argentina and Chile — issued a statement from Brasilia late Friday calling on both governments to resolve their differences peacefully.

The head of the Organisation of American States, Cesar Gaviria, also appealed to the two sides to reopen a dialogue and said he would travel to the region this weekend to try to mediate a solution.

The United States expressed "deep concern" Friday over the flare-up of tensions along the border between Peru and Ecuador, and urged both sides to resolve the dispute through negotiations.

"We understand that isolated fighting has taken place," State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly said.

"The developments are of deep concern to us and we believe to others in the hemisphere.... We call on both sides to put an immediate end to the localised flare-ups and to initiate a dialogue to resolve their differences."

The United States, as one of the guarantors of a protocol signed between the two countries on the disputed land, has renewed its offer of mediation," Ms. Shelly said.



Two firemen look over a dam wall which was erected to keep off waters of the Rhine River in Cologne (AFP photo)

## Floods create havoc in Europe

PARIS (AFP) — Some of the largest cities in northwest Europe were damaged by flood waters Saturday as torrential rain swelled rising rivers already bursting their banks after a week of had weather.

Large parts of western Germany, northern and western France, Belgium and Holland were under water.

In Germany the Rhine flooded parts of the old town of Cologne, forcing people to use rivercraft for transport in parts of Bonn, and immobilising more than 100 boats in Düsseldorf and Neuss.

As floods continued to cause havoc in northern and western France, in Paris the level of the Seine, which has already flooded quayside roads and stopped boat traffic on the river, reached 4.5 metres (almost 15 feet).

A man was found drowned Friday at Caen, western France, in his flooded caravan, bringing the French bad weather toll to 12 killed.

European weather forecasters predicted more heavy rain would hit some of the worst affected areas over the weekend and would last until the middle of next week.

In Cologne more than 400 people, watched by crowds of onlookers, battled in vain to stop the floodwaters breaching temporary de-

fences protecting the historic heart of the city, which was closed to all but river traffic by the police.

They could not, however, stop hundreds of people coming to watch the spectacle.

The crowds, lambasted by the popular press Saturday morning for impeding desperate attempts to set up flood barriers, watched as the rescue services worked in pouring rain.

The number of people directly affected by the floods in the city of 958,000 inhabitants was estimated at between 15,000 and 20,000.

By Saturday morning the Rhine had risen to 10.2 metres (33.6 feet), only slightly below the 100-year record set during the floods of Christmas 1993 that caused extensive damage in the city.

In several other parts of Germany roads were cut off. The chaos has already led to one senior politician, Joachim Hoerster, of the ruling CDU/CSU coalition, to criticise the federal authorities for failing to do more to stop the flooding.

Finance Minister Theo Waigel announced that financial help would be given to the flood victims, although he did not promise direct aid to those affected.

In the Netherlands, the Maas River rose steadily, flooding village after village in the southeast of the country. Authorities in Maastricht evacuated an underground car park of the provincial government building where the European Union treaty was signed because of expected flooding.

The towns of Borgharen and IJtaren were cut off by the river and the only means of transport was by boat. Downstream, the villages of Susteren and Stein were evacuated.

In Roermond and Venlo, teams of soldiers, firemen and volunteers filled sandbags to strengthen improved dykes along the Maas.

In Belgium the southeast Ardennes region faced major flooding with forecasters predicting more rain.

A bridge over the Meuse at Maaseik, near the Dutch border, was closed to traffic Saturday due to flooding and the situation was critical in several towns, including Dinant where 100 elderly people had to be evacuated from their homes.

Firemen worked furiously in that town to bring drinking water to residents and help them drain water rising dangerously in basements.

Trains were still working in the area but most were delayed.

## Survivors, soldiers mark Auschwitz liberation

MOSCOW (Agencies) — In a somber ceremony, survivors of the Auschwitz concentration camp marked the 50th anniversary Friday of the liberation of the camp alongside members of the Soviet army who liberated them.

Emma Grossman, 69, sighed heavily as she turned away from a vivid film clip of rows of mutilated children's corpses. "That could have been me," she said.

Grossman was among the 5,200 survivors of the camp freed when shocked Soviet soldiers opened the Auschwitz gates on Jan. 27, 1945 in the Polish town called Oswiecim.

Hundreds gathered in a central Moscow theatre to commemorate the anniversary, including camp survivors, relatives of camp victims and Soviet soldiers.

Nearby, Meyer Sholkover, 77, recalled the liberation from the other side.

"I couldn't imagine what these people had been through," said Sholkover, a Ukrainian Jew who served in the Soviet army and participated in the Auschwitz liberation.

"The ruin of the human body and spirit is such a terrible thing. I will never forget that sight," Sholkover's parents had

been killed earlier in World War II by Nazis in Ukraine. Dictator Josef Stalin and his inner circle in Moscow were aware there was a huge Nazi concentration camp where Jews were being slaughtered in the town the Germans called Auschwitz.

But they didn't tell the Soviet generals.

The Soviet soldiers were stunned to discover not a quiet Polish town but thousands of starving and tortured prisoners, some barely able to move.

Organised by the Moscow Holocaust Centre, Friday's ceremony included an exhibit of recently uncovered photos and explicit film footage of the camp following the liberation.

Ms. Goldman said she couldn't watch the shots of mass graves and huge piles of human hair, even 50 years later.

Ilya Altman, director of the Holocaust Centre, said "we will always carry this pain with us."

Soviet prisoners of war also were in Auschwitz and they were considered traitors for being captured.

Those who Friday mourned the 1.5 million dead of Auschwitz remembered among them the tens of thousands of non-Jews, mainly

gypsies and Roman Catholic Poles, who were murdered there.

The Auschwitz death camp was the key link in Nazi Germany's determination to wipe out European Jewry and about 90 per cent of those killed at the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex were Jews brought there by cattle trains from throughout Nazi-occupied Europe.

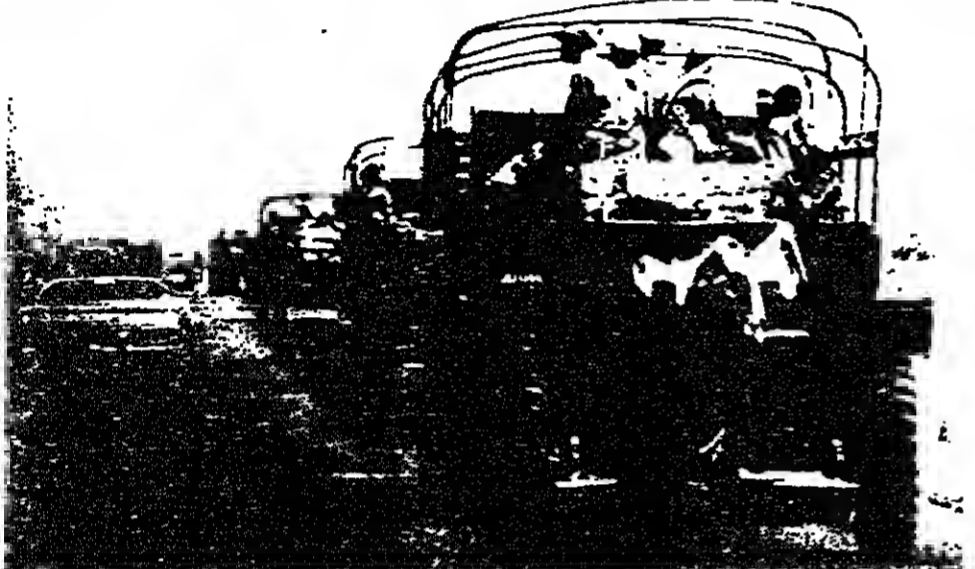
But the dead also included at least 70,000 non-Jewish Poles, including many Catholic priests subjected to horrific torture, and about 20,000 gypsies also viewed by Hitler's Germany as an inferior people.

Members of other religious groups, including Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses, were victimised as were people regarded as social misfits, such as homosexuals.

Nearly 20,000 Soviet prisoners of war also died in Auschwitz, more than half of them through starvation.

Polish authorities staged ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the camp's liberation by Soviet troops as an "ecumenical" rather than predominantly Jewish event.

That generated protests from Jewish activists who accused the government of insensitivity.



Peruvian troops and equipment are transported to Tumbes, Peru, near the border with Ecuador to reinforce troops in the area after clashes with the Ecuadorian army. Two clashes were reported in the last 24 hours with no victims. Ecuadorian President Sixto Durán Ballén declared a state of emergency (AFP photo)

## Vietnam, U.S. open liaison offices

HANOI (AFP) — Vietnam and the United States Saturday opened liaison offices in each other's capitals in their first step towards diplomatic relations in 41 years.

U.S. and Vietnamese officials signed two key accords — on the exchange of diplomatic properties and the settlement of financial claims — which they said made the opening of the offices effective immediately.

"This is another step (in relations). The signing represents the establishment of the liaison offices," James Hall, the new chief of the U.S. liaison office, in Hanoi, said.

The Americans have not fully moved into their new premises here, although the office could become operational later Saturday, officials said.

They added, however, that there were no plans for a ceremony or flag raising until the office started business in earnest on Feb. 3, after the Lunar New Year festivities here.

The long-delayed opening of the offices marks the first government ties in 41 years since the United States shut its Hanoi consulate after the Communist government took control of northern Vietnam in 1954.

## Deng expresses support for Jiang

BEIJING (Agencies) — Senior Chinese leaders, including President Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Li Peng, recently met with Deng Xiaoping, the official Xinhua News Agency said Saturday.

China's ailing 90-year-old paramount leader reportedly praised the country's leadership, expressing "baptism" over the great achievements made by the people of the whole country under the leadership of the Party Central Committee with Jiang Zemin at the core in the course of reform and opening-up," Xinhua said.

Mr. Jiang and other leaders "extended cordial greetings to Deng" prior to the Chinese New Year, which falls on Jan. 31.

Mr. Deng's youngest daughter, Deng Rong said in a recent interview with the New York Times that her father's health was declining day by day.

## Simpson proclaims innocence in book

LOS ANGELES (R) — O.J. Simpson proclaimed his innocence in a book and audio tape that went on sale Friday, saying he would have jumped in front of a bullet for his former wife Nicole, whom he is accused of murdering.

"I want to state unequivocally that I did not commit these horrible crimes. I loved Nicole. I could never do such a thing," Simpson says at the beginning of the book I Want To Tell You.

"How could anybody say I could kill this woman? How can anybody say that? Don't they understand that I'd jump in front of a bullet for Nicole? That I'd jump in front of a train to protect my family, to protect any member of Nicole's family?"

"Trust me, I never would have taken Nicole from our two little children. I would have taken myself out of their lives, not Nicole out of their lives," he adds.

The book is being published by Little, Brown and Co. and sells for about \$18. Simpson has pleaded not guilty to charges that he killed Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman on the night of June 12 outside her home in Los Angeles.

In the book Simpson says he believes the culprit will eventually be caught. "I have no doubt in my mind. It might be five years from now, it might be 10 years from now. I have no doubt."

The book, packed with colour photographs of the Simpsons and their children, Sydney and Justin, ends on a poignant note.

"On Nov. 21, 1994, I told Sydney and Justin that I was in jail and had been arrested for the death of their mother. They told me they already knew. Some of their friends had told them. They said they knew I was going to help find the people who killed their

mommy," Simpson says. Simpson, who gained fame as a sportscaster, movie actor and TV pitchman, had harsh words for Faye Resnick, the author of a controversial book, Nicole Brown Simpson: Diary of A Life Interrupted.

He described Ms. Resnick as a peripheral friend of Nicole.

"I know in my heart that the answer to the death of Nicole and Mr. Goldman lies somewhere in the world that Faye Resnick inhabited," said Simpson.

One of Simpson's lawyers asserted in court this week that Resnick was a cocaine user whom Nicole Simpson had helped seek treatment.

Simpson's trial on charges of killing his former wife, who was 35 years old, and Goldman, 25, was temporarily on hold Friday as Judge Lance Ito pondered punishing defence lawyers for what the prosecution decried as "ambush" tactics.

The prosecutors are enraged that Simpson's defenders are making references to witnesses they did not know about.

Meanwhile, prosecutor William Hodgman, who was taken to a hospital with severe chest pains Wednesday night, was resting comfortably and was expected to be released over the weekend.

His wife, Janice, told reporters she expected her husband to be back in court Monday.

Mr. Simpson, who has reportedly received a \$1 million advance for the book, co-authored by writer Lawrence Sanders, pondered in it what was going through his former wife's mind as she was being attacked in front of her home on the night of June 12.

"I wonder what Nicole was thinking at the end. I think now about what must have been going through her head

when she realised what was about to happen to her."

The book and the audio tape were the result of many hours of interviews with Simpson by Mr. Schiller at the Men's Central Jail in Los Angeles, Simpson's home since his June 17 arrest.

The book and the 90-minute tape were produced in response to some 300,000 pieces of mail received by Simpson in jail.

In one unsigned letter from California, addressed to "you scumbag and coward," the writer tells Simpson he should have shot himself in the white Bronco that his friend Al (A.C.) Cowling drove on the now-famous slow-speed police chase seen on television around the world.

His lawyers have since insisted that his real intent was not to flee, but to visit his ex-wife's grave, where he planned to commit suicide and that his best friend, Al (A.C.) Cowling, who was driving the white Ford Bronco, saved his life.

Simpson says of the bizarre event: "If it hadn't been for that Friday in June, that ride in my friend A.C.'s Bronco, I think many people would not have witnessed the desperate place I was in."

He credits Cowling with bringing "my almost lifeless body back in his Bronco. I would never have survived that Friday if it had not been for him."

In reply to a question from a writer in Boston about whether he also cries in prison for Goldman, Simpson says: "I feel badly for Mr. Goldman's family. I feel his family's hurt and pain but I had nothing to do with his death. To me he is like an unknown soldier."

## Perry denounces Republican defence provisions

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defence Secretary William Perry denounced as "disturbing" and "dangerous" the Republican Contract with America plans for the nation's defence.

Suggesting at one point that lawmakers should demand his resignation if they deem him to be doing a poor job, Mr. Perry said the Republican programme misstates the condition of the U.S. military, establishes an unnecessary review commission, and threatens to devastate vital military accounts by wasting money on an unnecessary missile defence system.

The "contract" was drawn up by Republican candidates for the House as a campaign pledge prior to their sweeping victories last November.

Now, it's become a series of working goals for the Republican-controlled Congress.

The comments came as Republicans moved quickly on several fronts to put their stamp of disapproval on President Bill Clinton's military policies, covering everything

from spending to the placement of U.S. troops under foreign commanders.

Appearing before the House National Security Committee, Mr. Perry said language in the contract alleging that the military is slipping into a "hollow force" status of the late 1970s is irresponsible.

"I find it disturbing on several counts," Mr. Perry said. "It is not only wrong but I think a dangerous statement that misleads the American people and it may confuse potential aggressors."

Mr. Perry labeled "deeply disturbing" a proposal in the contract to establish a special commission, composed mostly of Republicans, who would review the nation's long-term defence needs.

"I feel strongly that the proposed commission usurps the responsibilities of the secretary of defence," Mr. Perry said. Establishing such a commission, he said, amounts to a vote of no confidence both in his ability and that of the National Security Committee to fulfill their responsibilities.

"If you find that I'm incapable or unwilling to meet those responsibilities, you should ask me to step down as secretary of defence," Mr. Perry said.

Republicans on the committee at times sought to downplay the impact of the defence related contract provisions.

Rep. Floyd Spence, the committee chairman, said the provision in the contract opposing foreign command of U.S. forces is less rigid than it appears.

"This provision does not, I repeat, does not prohibit any U.S. president from placing U.S. forces under the command of the United Nations," Mr. Spence said. "It simply requires a president to certify to the American public that it is in our country's interest."

And Mr. Spence said that a contract provision supporting a Star Wars-type missile defence system could come "later rather than sooner" if Congress identifies higher defence spending priorities.

Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs

of Staff, told the committee that when vital U.S. interests are at stake or when the United States provides the bulk of a multinational force, a U.S. officer would have overall command.

But Gen. Shalikashvili added, "the president must retain the flexibility to place our units under the control of a competent foreign military commander."

The House International Relations Committee, meanwhile, was preparing its portions of the contract for floor action. The committee, which was also considering the issue of foreign command of U.S. troops, accepted an amendment proposed by Rep. Lee Hamilton, the ranking Democrat on the panel, stating that the bill does not "degrade or limit" the president's authority as commander-in-chief.

And the House Appropriations Defence Subcommittee went to work on its own version of a \$2.6 billion emergency defence bill to make up for money spent in overseas missions in Haiti, the Gulf and elsewhere.

## Phone bill shocks Swedish woman

OESTERSUND, Sweden (AFP) — A Swedish woman was disappointed to find only her phone bill in the mail recently, but disappointment turned to horror when she saw she had been charged 15.8 million kronor (\$2.1 million).

According to a quarterly bill sent to Galina Lamti of Oestersund, a small town in northern Sweden, she had made calls worth 12.5 million kronor (\$1.66 million), and had been charged 3.1 million kronor (\$413,300) in value-added tax. To have accumulated such charges, Ms. Lamti would have had to talk non-stop for one-and-a-half years to a distant country like Brazil. The Swedish telephone company, Telia, has apologized to Ms. Lamti for the error.

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — An international call on a cellular telephone helped save a chronically claustrophobic man trapped in a lift in Johannesburg, the Daily Star newspaper reported Friday. When the lift shuddered to a halt prematurely, the unnamed 24-year-old man pressed the alarm but no help arrived, the report said.

Fortunate enough to be carrying a cellular telephone, he called the only number he could remember in his panic-stricken state — his mother's in Francistown, in neighbouring Botswana. His mother, identified only as Patricia, called the Star and asked for help. The Johannesburg Fire Department was alerted and freed the trapped man. His ordeal lasted several hours, but had he not had a telephone it could have been days — the building is closed until Feb. 1. Patricia said her son was so chronically claustrophobic that he could not stay indoors for any length of time and had been in a "complete wreck" after his ordeal.

Taiwan seizes smuggled ivory carvings

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan customs officers have seized 7,043 kilograms of ivory carvings smuggled into the island from South Africa, local newspapers reported Saturday. The officials who found the carvings Friday said the bundle was smuggled into the southern port city of Kaohsiung from Johannesburg via Singapore some 15 days ago, but nobody had claimed it so far, two local evening newspapers said.

Taiwan banned the import of ivory in 1989 but private environmental groups say the illicit trade continues.

Members of other religious groups, including Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses, were victimised as were people regarded as social misfits, such as homosexuals.

Nearly 20,000 Soviet prisoners of war also died in Auschwitz, more than half of them through starvation.

Polish authorities staged ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the camp's liberation by Soviet troops as an "ecumenical" rather than predominantly Jewish event.

That generated protests from Jewish activists who accused the government of insensitivity.

The State Meteorological Agency said it had recorded more than 1,250 aftershocks since the big one, which measured 7.2 on the Richter Scale. A government panel on quake predictions said that an aftershock of up to six

relief goods once a day, including just a rice ball for each one," Mr. Hasegawa said. "We have to go around by bicycle to buy foods at any store that has managed to reopen."

The death toll rose to 5,099 with the number of missing people corrected to 17 as police located nine who had been unaccounted for. No survivors had been found since a week ago when three elderly were rescued more than 100 hours after the quake.

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Phone bill shock Swedish woman

OESTERSUND (AFP) — A Swedish woman was disappointed to find her phone bill in the mail recently, but she was shocked to find it was for 15.8 million kronor (\$1.1 million). According to a local newspaper, the woman, who lives in northern Sweden, had made calls worth 12.5 million kronor (\$916,000) in the last year. To have such a large bill, she said, would have had to be a non-stop for one-and-a-half years to a distant country like Brazil. The Swedish phone company, Telia, apologised to Ms. Lund, the error.

Cellular phone saves man trapped in lift

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — An international cellular telephone helped save a chronically ill, paraplegic man trapped in a lift in Johannesburg, South Africa, Friday. When the lift stalled, the unnamed 34-year-old man pressed the alarm button. A cellular telephone, which he had bought for his condition, helped him call for help. The Johannesburg Department of Health said the man, who had been in the lift for several hours, was freed after about 15 minutes. He had a "panic attack" after he was freed.

Taiwan seizes smuggled ivory carvings

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwanese officers have seized 14 ivory carvings from a smuggler in a small boat off the coast of southern Taiwan, Friday. The officials said the carvings, which were worth about \$100,000, were smuggled from Africa. The smuggler, a 35-year-old man, was arrested and charged with smuggling. The ivory carvings were found in a small boat off the coast of southern Taiwan.

Help wanted: Slithering viper

SOLICITORS (R) — A woman in a hospital has been asked to help find a slithering viper. The woman, who is a nurse, has been asked to help find a slithering viper. The viper is a rare species and is being kept in a hospital. The woman is being asked to help find the viper because it is a rare species and is being kept in a hospital.

Daisy loses tusks to ivory thieves

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Britons biggest bra buyers

PARIS (AFP) — Britons are Europe's biggest bra buyers, according to a survey by a French company. The survey found that Britons buy more bras than any other country in Europe. The survey also found that Britons buy more expensive bras than other countries.



After a spring-like Thursday new snow covered the streets of Sarajevo reminding the citizens of the Bosnian capital that winter is still far from being over (AFP photo)

4 more bodies dug up from Japan quake ruins

TOKYO (AFP) — Four bodies were dug up Saturday in a massive last-ditch search through the rubble of the Kobe earthquake while the plight of nearly 280,000 refugees threatened to reach a point of hysteria. Some 15,000 police and troops combed through rows of houses, reduced to ruins by quakes and fires, in their first joint operation as aftershocks continued to rock the port with a force of up to three on the Richter Scale. With a Siberian cold front moving in over the weekend, there was a sense of urgency among some of the homeless at 1,100 schools, parks and other shelters.



A couple walks past a collapsed house in Kobe earthquake which killed over 5,000 people (AFP photo)

"Although the Japanese are known for their discipline, our nerves have been racked by stress almost beyond control," Kunihiko Hasegawa said by telephone from Nagata, a working class district in the west of the city centre. "Everybody in Nagata faces food problems," said the 52-year-old private school teacher. He said his house withstood the quake 11 days ago and fire but he was speaking on behalf of 1,500 refugees at a local elementary school. "The city of Kobe sends in relief goods once a day, including just a rice ball for each one," Mr. Hasegawa said. "We have to go around by bicycle to buy foods at any store that has managed to reopen."

The death toll rose to 5,090 with the number of missing people corrected to 17 as police located nine who had been unaccounted for. No survivors had been found since a week ago when three elderly were rescued more than 100 hours after the quake. The State Meteorological Agency said it had recorded more than 1,250 aftershocks since the big one, which measured 7.2 on the Richter Scale. A government panel on quake predictions said that an aftershock of up to six

Japan, an academic body, found that more than 200 of the collapsed buildings had been built inadequately, with some main frames of office buildings illegally welded, the newspaper Mainichi said. The world's longest suspension bridge, under construction between Kobe and nearby Awajishima Island, has been stretched by 1.1 metres (3.6 feet), public works officials said. The crust of the earth beneath the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge has shifted — 0.2 metres (0.7 feet) to the east on the Kobe side and 0.3 metres (one foot) to the west on the island side, said the officials. "The foundation has shifted, but there is no problem for the safety of the bridge," one official said. The 10-year construction work on the 3,910-metre bridge started in 1988 at the cost of 480 billion yen (\$4.8 billion).

Japan's Crown Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako cut short their Middle East tour by two days and returned home Saturday due to their concerns about victims of the massive earthquake. The royal couple, who started the tour three days after the quake devastated Kobe and its vicinity, told Japanese reporters upon their departure from Amman that they felt "sorry about leaving Japan after the disaster." "I express my sincere condolences for the quake-stricken people," the 34-year-old prince was quoted by the Kyodo News Agency as saying. "I hope they will overcome their difficulties." The couple has visited Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan since Friday last week on their second tour of the region. Japan relies heavily on oil supplies from the region. Since their marriage in June 1993, the couple has travelled through Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain. Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko were scheduled to visit Kobe Tuesday to comfort quake victims. Meanwhile a team of U.S. disaster experts was to leave Washington Monday for Kobe, the White House said Friday.

Grozny — a ghost city where everyone waits for death

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — Chechen fighters here will die rather than leave and the civilians will die because they cannot leave — the last people in Grozny, for different reasons, are all waiting for death. In the only part of central Grozny still held by Chechen forces, stunned and hungry dogs outnumber humans. And those who have lived through a month of street fighting have resigned themselves to dying in the devastated place they call home. "Around the corner my neighbour was blown apart. That's how I could die, it could happen to me at any moment," said Nadia Vanova, a 40-year-old ethnic Russian woman whose flat was just behind Minutka, ground zero of round-the-clock Russian artillery shelling. "I'll stay to the end. This is my house. Where would I go, I've got nowhere else," she said, her sentences punctuated by the fierce crack of nearby explosions. Vanova said she did not even bother going into the bunker anymore, although her street has been shredded by shelling. "If I went there I would probably never come back up to my home. It's the principle of it," she said. Other civilians left in the ghostly streets of Chechen-held, southeastern Grozny, mostly Russians, are equally fatalistic. "This is my house, this is where I live," said Raisa Mikhailovna, 46, who was born in Grozny. People are now so used to war that



A mother waiting in a hospital in Nazran where her son is hospitalized for a broken leg, suffered during shelling of Grozny by Russian forces (AFP photo)

fighting. We're waiting for their ground troops," said a 26-year-old volunteer who carried a World War II vintage bolt-action rifle and would not give his name. Another soldier, who also would not give his name, said the Russian artillery was slowly levelling street after street, but "even if they do that, we won't leave." Uman Edilbekov, a 42-year-old frontline commander, said he felt no hatred for Russians and did not enjoy fighting — but for him death and killing has also become a fact of life. "I've been close enough to see the Russian soldiers' boyish faces. I'm sorry to kill those 17 year olds, boys have done half a year of military service. But we are defending our homes," he said. Russian ground forces stormed Grozny from the west, north and east on New Year's Eve. Chechen forces say they "control" the southeast quarter, but in reality they are simply surviving in a death zone of high explosives and flying shrapnel. Smoke poured from blackened buildings, broken and burning natural gas lines lit up deserted streets strewn with bricks and glass. At one crossroads, a lorry lay stranded across the road, its back window shot out by a sniper. Roofs were caved in at house after house. Walls were pocked with bullet holes. Thin cats and many dogs roamed aimlessly along the icy pavements. Civilians walked calmly on, oblivious to the fact that had the plane released its bombs they would have been killed or maimed. The Chechen soldiers, who fitted through the centre, in and out of the rubble, have also made a pact with death. "We won't leave. We have weapons that work in street

Croatia's U.N. decision forces NATO to review Bosnia pullout plan

BRUSSELS, Belgium (Agencies) — Croatia's decision to ask United Nations peacekeepers to leave its territory has forced NATO to review urgently plans to protect any U.N. withdrawal from Bosnia, officials said Friday. NATO is being forced to consider whether its forces also would be needed to support a U.N. pullout from Croatia, said an allied official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Military planners are also looking at whether the alliance can still rely on Croatian roads and ports in the event of a U.N. retreat from Bosnia. On Friday, the Croatian parliament backed President Franjo Tudjman's decision that the peacekeepers should leave when their mandate ends in March. The United Nations has kept an uneasy truce between Croatian troops and rebel Serbs for three years. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has drawn up plans to deploy up to 45,000 troops for the protection of U.N. peacekeepers if they are forced to leave Bosnia. The plans rely on using Croatia's land routes and sea ports. Officials at NATO headquarters said they hoped Mr. Tudjman would cooperate during a withdrawal from Bosnia, even if he carries out his threat to end the U.N. mandate in Croatia. NATO is trying, in the

meantime, to reach agreement with the United Nations on who will pay for an eventual evacuation. NATO sources said talks last week in New York failed to find a solution. NATO has yet to put a price tag on the operation, but allied nations want the United Nations to finance all or part of the costs. The nations contributing the most troops to the 24,000-strong U.N. force in Bosnia say they do not want to poll them out. But they asked NATO to draw up plans to escort the lightly armed peacekeepers if conditions become too dangerous. The United Nations Saturday reported a lower level of shooting in Sarajevo despite a report that international mediators had suspended their peace mission because of ceasefire violations in the city. Mediators from the "contact group" on Bosnia said they had been unable to get Bosnia's warring factions back round the negotiating table after the Serbs refused to drop their objections to the latest peace plan. Envoys of the five-nation group — Russia, the United States, Britain, Germany and France — decided to leave Bosnia, diplomats in Sarajevo said. In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly said serious violations of the ceasefire in Sarajevo had caused the mediators to suspend their

mission. But a United Nations military spokesman said the level of firing incidents in the Serb-besieged city had fallen dramatically since the ceasefire came into force on Jan. 1. Major Kees Sol confirmed that Serb and Muslim forces had clashed Thursday, the night before the mediators took their decision, and that at least one rifle grenade had been found in the area. But he said the U.N. in Sarajevo was now registering between 50 and 150 firing incidents a day in the city and surrounding front lines compared with a daily average of between 2,000 and 3,000 before the truce took hold. However, a key stumbling block in the peace process remained the Serbs' refusal to accept the contact group's peace plan, which awards 51 per cent of Bosnia to the Muslim-Croat federation and 49 per cent to the Serbs, Ms. Shelly said. The Muslim-led Bosnian government has accepted the plan. A senior Western official close to the contact group told Reuters in Bosnia: "We've gone back to our capitals to figure out what to do next. The Serbs weren't showing any inclination to give ground so we figured there was no point staying." A major problem was that the Bosnian Serbs did not face a credible threat of military force from NATO to make them compromise in

the interests of peace. "The Serbs just don't have a real incentive to move now. The problem is that there is no force in the equation. And I don't see any political will among the major powers for the use of force." The contact group had been trying to persuade the Bosnian Serbs to accept a peace plan which would require them to give up a third of the territory they hold. Elsewhere in Bosnia, the U.N. reported less fighting around the town of Bihac, a U.N. "safe area" in the northwest. But the nearby town of Velika Kladusa experienced "a medium level of fighting" Friday. The U.N. said it had been frustrated in its attempts to reopen the airport in the northern, Muslim-held city of Tuzla for use by U.N. military flights. Major Sol said Serbs whose guns threaten the airfield had refused to give guarantees that they would not shoot at U.N. aircraft. "The Bosnian Serbs are not willing or able to guarantee the safe passage of our aircraft," Maj. Sol said. The Bosnian government has told the United Nations it will take over the airport itself if it is not reopened. In London, British Lt.-Gen. Sir Michael Rose, the outgoing commander of U.N. forces in Bosnia, said Friday that killing would break out on an unprecedented scale if United Nations peacekeepers pulled out.

Split hits climax in India's Congress Party

NEW DELHI (R) — The split within India's ruling Congress Party is reaching a climax with Prime Minister Narasimha Rao laying formal party charges against a leading dissident, newspapers said Saturday. The Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC) of the Congress Party late Friday served a formal "chargesheet" on former cabinet minister Arjun Singh, suspended by Mr. Rao from the party last Tuesday. Mr. Singh has been asked to reply to the chargesheet within four days, the newspapers quoted a Congress spokesman as saying. Congress Party General Secretary Janardhan Pojary declined to divulge details of the chargesheet. DAC Chairman Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy said the Congress Working Committee, the highest decision-making body of the party, need not ratify the decision taken by the DAC. "The decks seem to have been cleared for Singh's expulsion from the Congress," the Asian Age newspaper said. The split within the party grew wider Thursday as Mr. Singh challenged Mr. Rao to call a special party meeting to discuss his complaints. Mr. Singh told reporters members of Congress's top forum should be allowed to debate the issues he had raised. "Every party man must be given an opportunity to have his say on different issues," Mr. Singh said. Mr. Singh quit the cabinet a month ago complaining Mr. Rao was ignoring minorities and being soft on corruption within the party. He has since become increasingly outspoken in his criticism of the government, providing a focus for dissent in the party and compounding Mr. Rao's problems. Mr. Singh said he was not prepared to back down on his stand on corruption. "Some people have swindled money in the scams... they should be punished," he said. "Why should the entire party earn a bad name for this?" Congress Party spokesman Madan Bhatia this week accused the former human-resource development minister of seizing on the party's recent electoral reverses to "advance his long-brewing political ambitions." Mr. Bhatia said Mr. Singh was hurting the party's electoral prospects by creating disaffection in party ranks and damaging the image of the Congress in the public mind.

Italy's hard right breaks with fascism

FIUGGI, Italy (R) — Italy's right-wing National Alliance Party formally launched itself Saturday, completing a break with the neo-fascist legacy of the followers of wartime dictator Benito Mussolini. The National Alliance became the main party on the hard right of Italian politics after its core group, the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement (MSI), dissolved Saturday. "We will consign to the judgment of history all the hatred and passions of the 20th century," Alliance leader Gianfranco Fini told the party's debut congress in the Spa town of Fiuggi. Mr. Fini, who also led the MSI, scored an important victory Saturday when the party backed a document that declared its work complete and said it should give way to the National Alliance. The suave and ambitious Fini, 43, has laboured to establish his democracy credentials in the face of the continued existence of the MSI. A mark of the new party's bid for respectability was the attendance Saturday of figures from across the political spectrum, including a de-

China rocket blast debris kills 6

BEIJING (R) — A rain of flaming wreckage from a Chinese rocket that blew up during a satellite launch killed six people and injured 23, deepening China's trauma over its worst space disaster. The spectacular explosion at dawn Thursday already had cast a pall over China's biggest holiday, the Lunar New Year Festival that begins Tuesday, and shocked space officials hoping to snare a bigger slice of the world launch market. The public was not told until late Saturday that the nationally televised disaster had also been deadly. The official Xinhua News Agency's delayed reporting of the deaths likely reflected acute official anxiety about the timing of the disclosure on the eve of the Year of the Pig. Xinhua said blazing wreckage of the powerful Long March 2E rocket and advanced Apstar 2 telecommunications satellite it was carrying killed six people within seven kilometres of the Xichang Space Centre in southwestern Sichuan province. It said falling debris also injured 23 people, probably peasants living near Xichang in a mountainous region of China's most populous province. No space workers were hurt and space centre itself was undamaged. Scores of foreign broadcast executives with interests in the Apstar satellite who had been flown to Xichang for the launch were returned to Beijing the same day without being told of the deaths.

Panel urges end to Security Council veto

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP) — As part of a reform of the United Nations, the Security Council should increase its membership by 65 per cent while the United States and other permanent members phase out their own veto rights, Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson said Friday. Mr. Carlsson, co-chairman of a panel of diplomats and international leaders, told the Associated Press that the group recommends the 15-member Security Council should be increased as soon as possible to 23 members to make the body more representative. The United Nations also should form a 10,000-member rapid deployment force to be dispatched quickly to world trouble spots, the panel said in its report Thursday to U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali at the start of the annual world economic forum of government and business leaders. The United Nations has grown dramatically since a relative handful of nations formed the world body at the end of World War II and selected the Soviet Union, China, Britain, France and the United States as permanent members of the Council, the panel said. "We live in a different world today," said Mr. Carlsson. "It's important to bring in some new countries." The panel recommends creating a new class of "standing" members who would be added to the permanent five. This would include two industrialised countries, and one from Latin America and one from Asia, he said. The panel declined to name who should be standing members, but it has been widely suggested that Germany, Japan, India and Brazil should be included. The group said it would be a backward step, however, to give the standing members the veto and that the permanent five should refrain from using their rights except in extreme cases until they give them up all together in 10 years.

World's land mine problem 'worsening'

WASHINGTON (AP) — Land mines kill or maim an estimated 500 people a week worldwide, and the problem is getting worse despite international mine clearance efforts, the U.S. State Department said Friday. "The simple fact is that more land mines are deployed in armed conflict every year are removed by mine clearance personnel," the department said in a report. It estimated that the world is littered with 80 million to 100 million anti-personnel land mines in 64 countries. Most of the victims are innocent civilians. Land mines cost as little as \$3 apiece and often look harmless, but their ability to kill or maim is just a footstep away. "The burden imposed by the proliferation and indiscriminate use of these weapons is beyond calculation," the report said. "The world must take stronger steps to address the problem." Secretary of State Warren Christopher, addressing a State Department gathering Friday, said that around the world "mines strewn in farmlands and paddy fields, in schoolyards and on country roads, make entire communities uninhabitable." "They drive people from their land," he said. "They keep refugees from returning home." "Ridding the world of these hidden killers will literally save tens of thousands of lives." The report cited estimates that mine clearance efforts extracted about 80,000 mines globally in 1993, but that 2.5 million mines were im-

planted. Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy, an anti-mine crusader, said it cost \$100 million to clear 80,000 explosives. At that rate, he said, it would cost \$100 billion to eliminate all land mines. "It's a global catastrophe," he said. Among other actions, the United States has imposed a ban on land mine exports and introduced a resolution in the U.N. General Assembly calling on all nations to take similar action. The study quoted Brigadier-General (ret.) Patrick Bladen, a U.N. demining expert, as saying, "we're losing the battle." The three nations with the largest land mine problem are Afghanistan, Angola and Cambodia, with an estimated 228 million mines combined.

## Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

Chairman of the Board of Directors: MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General: MOHAMMAD AMAD

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Editorial and advertising offices: Jordan Press Foundation, University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.

Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

## Peace must be protected

**RIGHT AFTER** the signing of the Washington Declaration on July 25, 1994, the U.S. administration and Congress, in a gesture of support to Jordan, moved to write off \$700 million of the Kingdom's foreign debt. In a further step towards bolstering peace in the region, President Bill Clinton wrote to his Western allies urging them to follow on U.S. steps and forgive the Kingdom's debts. That has not materialised. Nevertheless, aid, though not substantial by any standard, continued to trickle into Jordan from the U.S., the European Union and Japan. That aid, in forms of grants and soft loans, has been far below the expectations of most Jordanians who, rightly or wrongly, were made to believe that they would feel the peace dividend immediately after the signing of the peace treaty with Israel on Oct. 26.

In the words of the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Robert Pelletreau, the U.S. recognises that for peace to get hold in the region, the people must feel and enjoy the benefits it is supposed to bring. However, Mr. Pelletreau cautioned that while his administration would encourage U.S. private sector investment in Jordan, any formal aid to the region must go through a now Republican-dominated Congress that is not favourable to increasing U.S. foreign aid. Meanwhile, the Europeans are saying that they should not be expected to finance the peace process if they have only little say on its progress.

We, therefore, feel that for the process to maintain momentum and progress, the Americans and their rich European allies, who both have very high stakes in the success of the process, should work among themselves to ensure that the process will not stagnate or regress if the peoples concerned do not benefit from peace. Perhaps what the Americans should do is give the Europeans more say on how peace should be achieved and how the benefits, political and economic, should be shared by all the parties to the process including of course the Americans and the Europeans.

The peoples of the Middle East should not expect their economies to be transformed overnight as a result of the achievement of peace in the region. But other nations should realise that if the process fails the whole region will once again find itself living under the shadow of war. The reverberations of such a situation will reach far beyond the borders of the area. Neither the countries of the region nor other nations want such a situation to develop; they should not let it develop.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Saturday expressed concern over the situation along the Saudi Arabian-Yemeni borders and the tension which could lead to confrontation between the two neighbouring countries. We follow up with deep concern the movements on the ground and the massing of troops along the common border despite the statements from Riyadh and Sanaa that the two leaderships are keen on avoiding any clashes, said the paper. Any explosion in the Arabian peninsula would end with grave consequences to both sides and to the Arab national interests, benefiting the enemies of Arab solidarity, said the daily. We in Jordan join our voice to those who call for reason and for dialogue and peaceful efforts to defuse tension and ensure a peaceful outcome of the current crisis, continued the paper. Jordan would not doubt respond favourably to any request to mediate between the two sides and to contribute towards ensuring peace and stability, added the paper. It warned that certain foreign powers are pursuing efforts to perpetuate Arab divisions.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dostour daily said that the United States has displayed ingratitude to Egypt by maintaining close ties with the Islamic extremist groups which are behind the present disturbances to President Hosni Mubarak's regime. Looking back on Cairo's services to the West in general and Washington in particular, one remembers that it was Egypt which, under president Anwar Sadat, turned the tables on the Russians and sided by the American strategy in the Middle East region, said Salah Al Qalbi. He said that Egypt has sided with the United States in its confrontation with Iran and created the umbrella which the United States needed to launch its devastating war on Iraq in the Gulf war. Finally, it was Egypt, through the Camp David accords, which opened the way for the United States to pursue its programme for a settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Washington said the writer, should take lessons from history and ought to remember that it had regretted its abandonment of the Shah of Iran, a move that has continued to cost the United States very dearly.

### Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

## Worries about trade links with Israel should not be exaggerated

IN A matter of days or weeks, Jordan will enter into a trade agreement with Israel in accordance with the provisions of the peace treaty. Jordanian businessmen have the right to worry about any change in the ground rules. The lifting of the 47 years old boycott against Israel may have major consequences for them, alter the landscape and change the status quo. The worries can be felt at varying degrees on both Jordanian and Israeli sides, because the coming free trade flow was unthinkable until recently. The new state of affairs was never studied carefully. In fact, Jordanian businessmen do not know what to expect and what are the likely risks. Since the economic boycott was imposed by the Arab side, it is only natural to find that normalisation is an Israeli condition, and that Israel is expected to be the major beneficiary of normalisation.

Arab literature dwells excessively on the possible risks and damage that the Arab economies will suffer in case of a sudden removal of barriers. The most repeated risks that were pointed out are:

— The disparity in the degree of development: Israel is an advanced industrial country while Arab countries, including Jordan, are developing countries.

— The possibility that Israel may assume the role of the new coloniser and become the custodian of Arab riches.

— The fact that Israel has a surplus capacity in its productive units which it will try to utilise and dump in Arab markets. It will become the centre of services for the entire Middle East.

— The chances for the strengthening of an imperial base, because normalisation will make Israel stronger and, consequently, a higher threat to the security of the Arab World, especially its neighbours.

— This possibility that normalisation will be instrumental

in making a greater Israel possible and render Arab economies dependent on Israel.

— Israel will benefit from specialisation and the economies of scale.

— The enhancement of the Israeli qualitative superiority over the Arab quantitative resources.

Those points of view are worth examining and analysing. However, opposite points of view do exist. In general, the assumed risks stem from several assumptions, which are obviously baseless, such as:

— Israelis are superior and Arabs are inferior in the present and in the future and in all fields of technology, agriculture, management, etc., as if there is a racial superiority of Jew in comparison with Arab.

— Israel will be the active player while Arab countries will be passive; Arabs will remain forever subject to the Israeli action and not an equal.

— There is no value for the huge difference in favour of Arabs regarding area, population, vast economic resources, and culture.

— Israel will be in control of Arab states in case of peace. It will contain and lead the region as if it is the only country in the world that monopolises technology and information, and as if the major powers, like America, Europe, Japan and others, will withdraw from the Middle East markets in favour of Israel.

All these assumptions are wrong and without foundation. They stem from an inferiority complex. The advocates of exaggerated normalisation risks think that their warning against fatal risks is an evidence of wisdom and knowledge, while denying those risks or putting them in their real size is an indicator of selling out or surrender.

## Mosque and state in Sudan

By Abdul Salam Sidahmed

IN EARLY November, the Khartoum press reported a reconciliation between the Sudanese regime and an ultra-orthodox Islamist group called Ansar Al Sunna Al Mohammadiya (not to be confused with the Mahdist Ansar which provides the sectarian base of Sadiq Al Mahdi's Umma Party). The Ansar Al Sunna was founded in the 1940s as a puritanical religious organisation with no visible political ambition or involvement. Ideologically, they belong to the Wahhabi revivalist tradition which constitutes the official creed of Saudi Arabia.

Like most Islamist groups in Sudan and elsewhere, the Ansar Al Sunna experienced an upsurge in popularity during the late 1970s and '80s, evidenced by the spread of its mosques and "missionary" centres throughout the country. None the less the group maintained its essential political posture, and concentrated on strict adherence to the Shari'a, Islamic law, and the total seclusion of women.

With the increased fusion between Islam and politics in the last decade or so, the Ansar Al Sunna, being strenuous advocates of Shari'a, was gradually drawn into public pronouncements with hints of macro-politics. Thus the group supported former President Numeiri's experiment with Shari'a in 1983. Likewise it pledged support to the present National Islamic Front (NIF) regime following its take-over in 1989.

However, following the regime's pro-Iraq stand during the last Gulf war, the Ansar Al Sunna parted company with it and became highly critical of its conduct and policies. This may be attributed to the group's traditional ties with Saudi Arabia, and the latter's estrangement from Khartoum since the Gulf war. This factor notwithstanding, the present regime has deliberately excluded any religious group outside the NIF from power and influence. In 1993, when the Ansar Al Sunna became outspoken in its criticism of the government beyond the latter's narrow level of tolerance, its activities were curtailed and some of its members and leaders (including Sheikh Abu Zeid Mohammad Hamza, the group's number two) were detained.

In February last year a group of armed fanatics led by a Libyan, Muhammad Khalifi who was later executed, stormed the group's main mosque in north Omdurman during dawn prayer and attacked the worshippers with machine guns, leaving 19 dead and several others critically injured. The event triggered further hostility between the government and Ansar Al Sunna; several of its centres were closed and the ever outspoken Sheikh Abu Zeid was rearrested.

Against this background, the current reconciliation

## The Sudanese regime seems resolved to allow Islamic parties a share in its religious authority as long as they stay away from politics

between the government and Ansar Al Sunna is more of a truce than an agreement. Under its terms, the government agrees to stop its harassment and detention of the group's members; whereas the latter will refrain from agitation and harsh criticism of the government. The significance of the agreement is that it has relieved the regime from stubborn and often embarrassing criticism from a religious group, even if the latter is a minority one. For Ansar Al Sunna, it might mean unhampered religious activities, its compromised political stand notwithstanding. Additionally, one might read an external dimension to this deal: namely, a calculated gesture by the Khartoum regime towards the Saudis. Though the potential is remotely there, it would take more than overtures to ultra-conservatives to engage Riyadh in a process of rapprochement with Khartoum. Therefore the significance of the government's deal with Ansar Al Sunna remains confined to domestic affairs and somehow linked to the wider contest of religious authority and legitimacy.

### Gestures of reconciliation

Prior to the announcement of the deal with Ansar Al Sunna, the government extended gestures of reconciliation to the Umma and Democratic Unionist Parties (DUP), the constant partners of parliamentary rule in Sudan, and currently the backbone of the umbrella opposition, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). Confirmed reports suggested that top-level talks did take place with the two parties both at home and abroad during the last months of September and October. However, the talks failed because the NIF's negotiators were effectively offering next to nothing in terms of power-sharing and related questions. They only emphasised the necessity of a Sudanese solution to preempt foreign intervention in the country's affairs.

There is one particular justification for this recent reconciliation bid of the Sudanese regime: namely, the south. Despite its military gains, the government is growing increasingly restless about the stalemate there. Moreover, the peace negotiations under the auspices of the Inter-

government Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) have proved that gaining the upper hand in the field does not automatically lead to a negotiated settlement on the government's terms. Accordingly, if the Sudanese regime is able to reconcile the mainstream parties, Umma and DUP, it would enhance its negotiating credentials, with both the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) factions and the mediators, the IGADD countries.

There is however another dimension to this issue, the question of religious authority and legitimacy. Despite its success in wielding political power and maintaining it against all the odds, the NIF has not been able to enforce its religious authority over the country's Muslim majority. Historically, Sudan, unlike other Muslim societies, did not witness the growth of a centralised religious authority in any form (no hierarchy of ulama as in Iran and Saudi Arabia, or prestigious institution of learning as in Egypt or Tunisia).

By and large, whatever may be regarded as a religious authority has remained local and apolitical. One manifestation of this is the mosque, which has maintained its historical role as a religious and social institution in contemporary Sudan, but has steered clear from direct political involvement or agitation.

Within this context, those religious groups with political ambition, such as the "protonational" sects of the Ansar and Khatmiya, formed or supported political parties (Umma and DUP respectively). Likewise, the predecessor of the NIF, the Muslim Brotherhood, appeared in the early 1950s essentially as a political party with a religious agenda. Moreover, unlike its counterparts in other Muslim countries, it did not build its mobilisation and agitation strategy around the mosque, but rather around the student campuses and other conventional platforms of political activity (such as trade unions, army, mass organisations etc.).

However the mosque was occasionally used for political purposes. The leaders of the Ansar and Umma parties sometimes resorted to "mosque politics" when denied direct political activity. During the 1980s the NIF, then passing through its phase, also used the mos-

que pulpit for political agitation and mobilisation, although its emphasis continued to be laid on conventional political activity.

Despite its comparative minority position, the NIF actually news itself as the heir to the Khatmiya and Ansar sects and their political wings in both political and religious terms. Having achieved political power, the NIF faced the difficult task of enforcing its religious legitimacy and authority. This goal has been pursued on two levels: first destruction of the economic and social power of sectarian leaders through confiscation of their properties and economic interests and the displacement of their business associates; second, dismantling of sectarian religious authority. Towards this end the government "nationalised" the 19th-century mosque of the Ansar in central Omdurman and declared it a state mosque. Simultaneously, it pursued an extensive programme of "Islamisation" through education, the media and, of course, the mosque.

Consequently, the mosque was virtually pushed to the centre of social life in northern Sudan and became increasingly politicised. Yet, the experience of Ansar Al Sunna shows that the process could backfire. Instead of enhancing the religious authority of the regime in place of traditional sectarianism, the zealous pursuit of Islamist programmes seems to be leading towards the gradual politicisation of smaller religious groups who have hitherto had little or no interest in politics.

To "nationalise" or close the centres and private mosques of these groups is politically and religiously sensitive as a general pattern (though individual suppression has occasionally been applied). Alternatively, a modus vivendi seemed the most suitable course of action for the regime. If the deal with Ansar Al Sunna is to become a model, it calls on the religious groups, or any other force with an Islamist agenda of a sort, to recognise the political authority and legitimacy of the NIF regime in exchange for a measure of religious autonomy. Depending on the case, the offer might include also symbolic participation in "harmless" bodies such as the Transitional National Council (an appointed parliament) or the recently appointed Peace Council.

Therefore, instead of a fruitless pursuit to enforce its religious authority on the entire Sudanese Muslim community, the NIF appears to have resolved, at least temporarily, to allow others a share in this religious authority as long as they do not "meddle in political affairs." Ironically, that is how the secularists in Sudan and elsewhere would like to see the role of Islam and Islamist groups, i.e. confined to religious affairs.

Middle East International

## Diplomats say Bahrain riots pose little threat

By Youssef Azmeih  
Reuters

MANAMA — A spate of anti-government agitation and arson has raised questions about the durability of Bahrain's ruling elite, but diplomats and residents in the Gulf island state are convinced the government has little to fear.

They said the unrest, confined almost exclusively to villages of the island's historically restive Shiite Muslim community, appears to have run out of steam.

"The government was never under threat... these were mainly pinpricks," one foreign diplomat said.

Minor incidents were reported by residents in one or two villages on Thursday night, the start of weekend when most of the rioting had dropped over the past two months.

They said a heavy police presence might have deterred potential troublemakers — a measure of the government's success in suppressing the unrest.

Youths trying to mark the 40th day after the death of a man in clashes with the police early in December — the 40th day is an important religious occasion for Shiites — were prevented from doing so and a few were arrested, residents said.

"We were watching out for Thursday night... very little happened, which is reassuring to the expatriates worried about a resumption of the trouble," one Western diplomat said.

The government blames incitement by militant clerics for the troubles in which five people, including a policeman, were killed. A sixth man, seriously injured in previous riots, died in hospital on Thursday night, residents said.

The Sunni-dominated government this month deported four Iranian-trained clerics, all in their late 20s or early 30s, including Sheikh Ali Salman, whose arrest on Dec. 5 sparked the riots.

The emir, Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, has blamed "foreign quarters" for the troubles, a reference to radical Iran whose media have been broadcasting wildly exaggerated claims about the extent of the unrest and the resulting deaths.

Mr. Salman and the other deportees apparently all studied at religious seminaries in the Iranian holy city of Qom. Government sources say some of those

involved in the unrest trained with Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Iran or at camps in Lebanon.

Opposition sources say up to 2,000 people have been arrested since the unrest started, many held for only a few days. Several hundred remain in prison.

But the arrests have not deterred a revival of political life in the island state that is unusually buzzing with political gossip. Political parties are banned.

"The barrier of fear has been broken," one opposition source said of the debates in Bahrain where political discussion was virtually taboo until recently because people feared the long arm of the security forces.

Opposition figures in Bahrain see the unrest as part of a wider movement for democracy in the state that lies a few kilometres off Saudi Arabia's richest oil producing region.

They say they have so far gathered 21,000 signatures on a petition calling for the restoration of the elected parliament that was dissolved 20 years ago.

This is a relatively large number in a small country with a native population of less than 400,000. The petition, the second to be organised in two years, has yet to be presented.

But the 1992 petition was rejected and diplomats expect the new one will suffer the same fate.

The emir three years ago appointed a shura (consultative) council to widen representation but its role is purely advisory, along the lines of similar councils appointed in neighbouring states like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

"You don't expect us to go faster (towards democracy) than our neighbours," one government source asked rhetorically.

One democracy activist said the sectarian nature of the unrest — confined to Shiites who account for about two-thirds of the island's native population — was a setback for political freedoms on the island.

"It has alienated the Sunnis," he said.

The wealthy merchant class, mostly Sunnis traditionally allied with the ruling Al Khalifa family, have generally rallied behind the government.

But the island's Sunni Muslim militants, who would have been expected to join in the agitation, have kept their distance mainly because of its sectarian nature, opposition sources said.

### LETTERS

## Exercise in casuistry

To the Editor:

THE ARTICLE by Rami Khouri on "Terrorism, colonialism and peace in Palestine and Vietnam" (Jordan Times, Jan. 24) is an eloquent, if long-winded, exercise in casuistry. While on the one hand it condemns acts of terrorism such as the most recent example at Bait Lid, on the other hand it attempts to provide a psychological justification for it, though not a moral one. It also claims to represent the feelings of "many, and perhaps most Palestinians and other Arabs" as "not particularly anguished", or "outraged" that Israeli soldiers are being killed and injured by the score.

I do not know by what method Mr. Khouri is able to claim that he knows the feelings of "perhaps most" Palestinians and "other Arabs" but I suspect that his views are based on a wish to appeal to an audience which he thinks will applaud his views. As one of the "other Arabs", I have an equal right to propose that "many, and perhaps most Palestinians and other Arabs" are in fact extremely "anguished", and not at all "gleeful" at an act which they have learned from bitter experience does not advance their cause, but on the contrary, prejudices it.

The motive for the suicide bombings at Bait Lid and on previous occasions was not, as Mr. Khouri claims, frustration at "the demeaning nature of the peace talks underway with Israel". Those who inspired it do not conceal that their goal is the destruction of the Israeli state. They are not unhappy, as Mr. Khouri is, that the negotiations underway with Israel seem to be making no headway. They are delighted with that fact, because it gives plausibility to their belief that no peace is possible with Israel; and if no peace is possible, war is the only alternative.

Mr. Khouri is scornful of "Arab official political psyches", and hints that we are in a situation similar to that of the United States when it signed a peace accord with North Vietnam in the early 70s, when "governments made peace, but the people did not", so that these "accords were subsequently rendered meaningless by the anger of the people in whose name they were signed" — presumably a stern warning to the regime in Jordan. I do not believe that there is any danger that the people of Jordan, including its Palestinian population, will become angry with the regime which made peace with Israel; they are more likely to become angry with those who, perhaps unconsciously or unintentionally, endorse the views of those who do not want peace, and justify the actions of those who opt for war.

Cecil Hourani,  
Amman.

(Continued from page 1)

once negotiations on the peace process. Jordan is committed supporting any efforts would lead to a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region. The King was quoted as saying:

"During his current trip to the Middle East, Mr. P. the Middle East. Mr. P. visited Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt to discuss foreign policy priorities which included helping to reach just and comprehensive peace, securing the Gulf region, ensuring U.S. access to energy sources vital to the U.S. economy and helping reduce the threat of weapons of mass destruction."

The U.S. official said discussed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who has

## Israel to b

(Continued from page 1)

government," he said. "modification or change in the law could be carried out without explicit Jordanian government permission." Farmers need special permission to enter the area, he said. The Royal Engineers Corps have placed concrete and metal border markers and also built new access roads to the areas being turned by Israel to Jordan, he said.

Asked whether Jordan was planning to deploy security forces for permanent

## Lawmak

(Continued from page 1)

to have become a normal behaviour that is growing becoming clearer in Jordanian society."

He said it seems "some are trying to imitate this behaviour a last reality."

Mr. Masri said this normal behaviour was taking despite His Majesty King Hussein's repeated assertion that national unity is a pillar of stability in the country. But, he said, these calls maintain national unity remain unimplemented.

The 30-member cabinet, Sharif Zaid includes the ministers of Palestinian Affairs.

Mr. Masri warned that weakening of the feeling of justice and political stability is a great segment of the economy and the social cohesion of the country.

"His Majesty the King repeated calls to treat citizens equally despite their origin must be translated into policies and the government to announce that clearly take measures to guarantee the commitment to, and implementation of the principle," Mr. Masri said.

Mr. Masri urged the government to draft a new election law that would ensure democracy, strengthen national unity and ensure equality for all citizens.

He stressed the "unity" that bind Jordanians, saying an "enlightened" government approach towards Palestinians would result in enabling Jordan and Palestine to stand up to the economic challenges that Israel would pose.

But Mr. Masri said should be left to the people decide what form of relations they will have in the future, challenging those who profess separation between two peoples to show evidence that this separation work for or forever remain.

Mr. Masri urged the government to assert the Muslim identity of Jordan, saying that commitments of the Arab World are stronger than all other agreements including the peace treaty with Israel. The former House speaker also criticised what he called the limitation

## Relief

(Continued from page 1)

Permission, however, been granted by the U.S. and the Jordanian government to transport the collected medical relief to Iraq. Mr. Jose said. A recent visit to Iraq by a British Red Cross delegation also expressed concern over the increasing number of deaths attributed to malnutrition and a lack of medicines, he said, adding that the organisation was a

## U.S. committed to Jordan's needs

(Continued from page 1)

ance negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the peace process.

"Jordan is committed to supporting any efforts that would lead to a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region," the King was quoted as saying.

During his current trip to the Middle East, Mr. Pelletreau visited Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt to discuss foreign policy priorities which included helping parties reach just and comprehensive peace, aiding security in the Gulf region, securing U.S. access to energy resources vital to the U.S. economy and helping reduce the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

The U.S. official said he discussed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who has said

that Egypt will oppose signing the treaty which is up for renewal in April if Israel does not sign. The treaty requires 85 of the 168 original signatories to remain effective, binding all original signatories to the treaty.

Mr. Pelletreau said the U.S. hopes that as many governments as possible "will be able to speak in favour of the treaty."

"We are talking about it in a serious and quiet way," he said, but ultimately it is a sovereign decision for each country.

Jordanian officials quoted by Reuters said Mr. Pelletreau discussed with Sharif Zeid obstacles in advancing the peace process and bilateral relations.

"Jordan stressed its concern with lack of tangible advance on the Syrian track, a prerequisite to continued progress towards comprehensive Middle East peace," one official said.

## Yemen wants monitors

(Continued from page 1)

Negotiators prepared to hold more talks in Riyadh Saturday in a bid to resolve the dispute which has provoked several armed clashes on the border, but an official in Sanaa was pessimistic about chances for success.

The official in Sanaa who requested anonymity told AFP that draft proposals from the two sides were "irreconcilable."

The two countries are in dispute over the provinces of Najran, Jizan, and Assir close to the border and assigned to Saudi Arabia under a treaty signed in 1934. Yemen argues the Taif accord expired in September 1992 but has said it is willing to renegotiate the treaty.

## King stresses media role

(Continued from page 1)

Israel that enabled us to regain sovereignty on our land and maintain our rightful shares in water."

Gerard Gatnot, IOJ's outgoing secretary general, hoped that peace would prevail in this region pointing out that journalists are the first to be influenced and affected by continuous wars.

"There can never be freedom of expression and opinion under a condition of continuous war. Journalists have always been the victims, often paying with their lives," Mr. Gatnot said. "But this sad era has come to an end and there is hope that peace will triumph."



An Israeli soldier guards Palestinian demonstrators, detained after two settler caravans were set ablaze on the West Bank hill of the Maale Amos settlement (AFP photo)

## PNA warns against blockade

(Continued from page 1)

Jewish settlers and Palestinian protesters clashed near the West Bank settlement of Maale Amos on Saturday. The settlers fired at Palestinians torching two mobile homes installed to expand the settlement, a witness said.

No one was hurt in the confrontation outside Maale Amos, an isolated Jewish enclave 20 kilometres south of Jerusalem.

It was the most violent incident since Palestinians began protesting against a settlement expansion campaign launched by settler leaders in mid-December.

Saturday's confrontation began at about noon when some 100 Palestinian villagers and 30 Israeli peace activists arrived to inspect three mobile homes set up earlier this week by settlers on three hillsides surrounding Maale Amos in a land grab.

A small group of Palestinians set ablaze a trailer while the other demonstrators were walking uphill to the second mobile home, said Palestinian peace activist Mubarak Awad who denounced the arson.

Maale Amos settlers began firing in the direction of Dr. Awad and his group from inside the settlement, Dr. Awad said. The demonstra-

tors flung themselves to the ground until the shooting stopped.

Settlers fired 200 to 300 rounds from rifles and sub-machine guns, said Israeli peace activist Uri Avnery.

The army confirmed that settlers opened fire, but said they shot in the air, not at people. Troops detained three Palestinians on suspicion of torching the trailer.

The peace activists denounced the violence by both sides, but said future clashes over land were inevitable.

They accused Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of backing the settlers' land-Arab campaign in West Bank areas he eventually wants to "annex."

"A new chapter of the war has started under the flag of peace," Mr. Avnery said. "The Rabin government is using the settlers to create a map of annexation."

**'Elections postponed'**

Israel and the Palestinians have agreed to postpone Palestinian elections until all aspects of Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank are resolved, an Israeli official said.

Israel Radio reported that Mr. Rabin had offered to temporarily pull back Israeli troops in the West Bank to allow the Palestinians to hold earlier elections.

Mr. Arafat, however, told

Mr. Rabin he preferred to delay elections until a full Israeli pullout was worked out, the radio said.

The Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed the radio report.

Mr. Arafat's spokesmen declined to comment on the report.

Meanwhile a 24-year-old lieutenant died Saturday of wounds he suffered in the double suicide bombing last week, bringing to 21 the number of Israelis killed, an army spokesman said.

The soldier was with 20 other soldiers killed in the attack Sunday at a bus station near the coastal town of Netanya, north of Tel Aviv.

A Palestinian was killed and another wounded in explosion in the Israeli-occupied West Bank city of Hebron on Saturday, a Palestinian source said.

The circumstances of the blast were unclear.

Rafael Eitan, an ultranationalist MP and a former army chief of staff, on Saturday proposed sending tanks into the autonomous Gaza Strip to wipe out militants there.

"If Gaza is becoming a refuge for terrorists we must enter it with tanks to liquidate them," Mr. Eitan, leader of the Tzomet party, told Israeli radio.

## Israel to begin pullout tomorrow

(Continued from page 1)

government," he said. "No modification or change to the land could be carried out without explicit Jordanian government permission."

Farmers need special permission to enter the areas at night, he said.

The Royal Engineering Corps have placed concrete and metal border marking and also built new access roads to the areas being returned by Israel to Jordan, he said.

Asked whether Jordan was planning to deploy security forces for permanent monitoring of the new international borders with Israel, Brig-Gen. Shurdom said: "Both sides are free to adopt whatever security measures are needed on their side of the border."

He said there will not be any limits on the military presence in the border areas and there is no stipulation that foreign observers would be posted in the areas.

Among the additional work undertaken by the Armed Forces were the demolition of an old bridge in the Baqoura area and the

building of a new one, paving roads in the Wadi Araba region, setting up watchtowers and entry points, and land surveys ahead of the return of the territory.

"Jordanians are fully committed to the text and spirit of the peace treaty but that includes a commitment by and awareness of all that this agreement would bear fruits for the country's future," said Brig-Gen. Shurdom. "The fruits of peace will not materialise right away, but I am sure that by continuous and serious efforts, we can achieve security and prosperity for our country."

the cabinet has weakened the performance of the legislature and reflected negatively on its image.

To solve this "problem," Deputy Abdul Hafez Shakhanbeh (Madaba) proposed granting members of Parliament the same privileges that ministers enjoy.

He said some lawmakers have become "slaves" because of the demands of their constituencies for jobs, which, he alleged, some ministers give to people with whom they seek to curry favour instead of filling vacancies in the public sector in accordance with the law.

The deputy said this practice should stop and legislators should not have to "beg" ministers for services in their constituencies.

Addressing the peace treaty with Israel, leftist Deputy Khalil Haddadin (Amman) said that as "nationalists" members of the Arab Baath Party will use all constitutional means to prevent normalisation with Israel.

Citing the government's task of implementing the peace treaty as the reason, Deputy Talal Obeidat (Irbid) announced that he will withhold confidence from the government.

The House will resume its debate today. Eight more deputies are scheduled to take the floor to express their views on the government.

It is from the IAF and leftist deputies who will speak today that the government is expected to have the strongest criticism over the peace treaty.

Parliamentary sources said the IAF has almost reached a decision on having Deputy Abdullah Alkhalil (Tafilah) deliver a speech on behalf of all its members. In the speech, the IAF is expected to attack the peace process and demand more freedom for the opposition in expressing its views.

Also taking the floor today will be leftist deputies Basam Haddadin and Toujan Faisal who are expected to withhold confidence.

Lawmakers will cast their votes after the government responds to their remarks. If, as expected, the session ends today, it will be the shortest session on a vote of confidence since the parliamentary elections in 1989.

## Lawmakers debate policy

(Continued from page 1)

to have become a norm of behaviour that is growing and becoming clearer in the Jordanian society."

He said it seems that "some are trying to make (this behaviour a lasting) reality."

Mr. Masri said this norm of behaviour was taking root despite His Majesty King Hussein's repeated assertions that national unity is a pillar of stability in the country.

But, he said, these calls to maintain national unity remain unimplemented.

The 30-member cabinet of Sharif Zeid includes three ministers of Palestinian origin.

Mr. Masri warned that the weakening of the feeling of justice and political stability among a great segment of society will reflect badly on the economy and the social cohesion of the country.

"His Majesty the King's repeated calls to treat citizens equally despite their origins must be translated into practice and the government has to announce that clearly and take measures to guarantee the commitment to, and implementation of the practice," Mr. Masri said.

Mr. Masri urged the government to draft a new election law that would consolidate democracy, strengthen national unity and ensure equality for all citizens.

He stressed the "unique ties" that bind Jordanians and Palestinians, saying that an "enlightened" government approach towards the Palestinians would result in enabling Jordan and Palestine to stand up to the economic challenges that Israel would pose.

But Mr. Masri said it should be left to the people to decide what form of relations they will have in the future, challenging those who profess separation between the two peoples to show evidence that this separation would work "or forever remain silent."

Mr. Masri urged the government to assert the Arab Muslim identity of Jordan, saying that commitments to the Arab World are stronger than all other agreements, including the peace treaty with Israel. The former House speaker also criticised what he called the limitations

of democratic freedoms in the past two years when, he said, there was no tolerance of the opposing points of view.

But Mr. Masri said Sharif Zeid is an able man who has been involved in the policy-making process for years, and can, with his team that has many qualified members, take the right decision to right the wrongs and start building a modern state. Without such a modern state, he said, the Kingdom cannot attain the political weight that it deserves in the region.

"This House has suffered from excess in rhetoric in the past period. Now is the time for serious work and for action," said Mr. Masri.

But Mr. Masri agreed with other lawmakers that the policy statement of the government is a comprehensive and solid plan of action which should be implemented.

Sharing the views of Mr. Masri that democracy has suffered in the past period, was Deputy Mohammad Daoudiyeh (Tafilah) who expressed confidence that Sharif Zeid and his team will be able to put things on the right track.

He said Sharif Zeid understands the importance of maintaining cooperation with the legislature and he would have obtained the confidence of the House even if his cabinet had not included any parliamentarians.

While expressing respect for the Islamic Action Front and leftist lawmakers who oppose the government for "practical reasons," Mr. Daoudiyeh criticised parliamentarians whose opposition, he said, is based on personal considerations.

Mr. Daoudiyeh, a former head of the press office at the Royal Court, said it was unacceptable to view the opposition as opposition to the regime saying that its existence is a healthy sign for the country.

While Mr. Daoudiyeh said Sharif Zeid's inclusion of 17 lawmakers in his cabinet was a proof of the premier's respect for the role of the legislature, other deputies criticised what they called parliamentarians' race to become ministers.

Deputy Mifteh Al Lawzi (Amman) said this yearning by some lawmakers to join

the executive authority. I urge all the Parliament members to follow my example and refuse to intercede or mediate or beg for such matters since every responsible official is guided by rules and laws, and the vacant posts are for all applicants and citizens, not for a specific district. The deputies' stand is also weakened because there are many who seek to become ministers at all costs. Deputies seek such posts because they wish to enjoy the ministerial privileges such as good pensions. Such privileges should be granted to the Parliament members so as to stem the House members' strong desire to be ministers. I demand that Parliament set up mechanism for monitoring the executive authority and its performance and give the Audit Bureau additional authorities to control matters. With regard to the government's policy statement I can say that we are at the threshold of a new stage following the peace treaty. This government should act in a manner to satisfy the aspirations of people who had pinned great hopes on the treaty, but felt that nothing has materialised. This government should carry out reform in the economy, education and public administration, and achieve social justice. It should stem poverty and unemployment, introduce a health insurance system for all citizens and help build the institutions which help establish the rule of law.

Having carefully read the government's policy statement I found nothing new. The government has not committed itself to achieving anything within a given period. The statement contained general terms suitable for any government in any third world country. The statement says that public administration reform will be carried out. This implies that administrative corruption exists. But how will the government deal with it? I would like to point out that the Social Security Corporation has not been wisely investing public funds. This corporation, which holds JD 400 million, does not invest except in shares and real estate or by depositing funds in the

## Excerpts from speeches of lawmakers on government policy

(Continued from page 3)

banks. Governments are changed in any country, not for the sake of appointing favoured persons, but rather in response to necessities for change which benefit the public interest. This government is contradictory in its structure. It does not reflect whether the minister's post is technical or political. Although the cabinet includes some members with high qualifications eligible for their posts, it contains people unfit for their portfolios. I call on the House to conduct the vote of confidence in the government by voting on each individual minister rather than the Cabinet as a whole.

**Ibrahim Zubi**  
(Independent, Ramtha, Bani Kenanbeh)

No doubt this ministry was formed to cater to the needs of a new stage and for a march that started at earlier stages. This stage has its own conditions and problems.

For fairness sake, I say that the previous government has led Jordan through the most difficult stage in its history, has exerted its utmost to serve the interest of the country in the present and the future, has given most concern to foreign affairs, and was excused to do so. The new government is destined to lead the country in the most dangerous and critical stage in its history. It is required to start from the point where the previous government had finished...thus its responsibilities are very grave, requiring individual and group efficiency and creativity. There are (problems such as) poverty, unemployment, hunger, soaring prices, monopoly and exploitation. All of these are challenges that should be met with courage, wisdom and determination... On the external front, there are administrative and legal procedures resulting from the peace treaty...and there are the torn Arab relations that this country of reconciliation, solidarity and unity should have a positive role in mending...this government, since its first days, has embarked on carrying out its duties by taking wise and positive steps in the right direction, and yes, there is the unjust siege

of death and murder imposed on brotherly Iraq, and there are Islamic and international causes that are linked to us in one way or another... All these challenges require that we renew our foreign policy, our media policies, and require a revolution in administrative reform to fight corruption in all its forms and sources... The government's programme as expressed in its policy statement is balanced and integrated, aspiring to achieve national prosperity. Therefore I view any efforts by the legislative authority to help the government in carrying out its policies (as expressed in its statement) as efforts to help the country at present and in the future. This requires, more than at any other time, concordance and agreement between the legislative and executive authorities to help the government carry out its policies.

**Hani Hijazin**  
(Abd, Karak)

I start my speech by congratulating the prime minister and his ministerial team over the King's confidence in them.

I have read the government's policy statement and examined all its parts. I was fully convinced that the government is determined to offer all it can for Jordan...and is seeking a good and peaceful future for its people.

I did not find in the statement any gap to criticise or comment on, except to mention some urgent and pressing demands:

Regarding unemployment and poverty...although I know the economic and financial conditions of Jordan, I cannot excuse the government for any failure in finding solutions to the problem of unemployed youth waiting for any job opportunities.

The government asked in its statement from the people to wait and be patient. Work should be done to help this category of citizens by establishing small and medium industries and to urge investors in every governorate to use their capital in development projects that would benefit the citizens and the country...

I also ask the respected government to monitor prices of commodities in a more

serious way and to set the prices of all commodities... In addition, I urge the respected government to make Christian feast national holidays observed by closing all ministries and government departments.

**Talal Obeidat**  
(Independent, Ramtha, Bani Kenanbeh)

I am withholding confidence in the government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker. This government is number 81 on the list of cabinets formed in Jordan since 1921 until today. All these governments presented their policy statements to Parliament to win a vote of confidence. A reading of these statements reveals that they are similar and almost identical. The present government, which succeeded the cabinet of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali that concluded the peace treaty with Israel, is entrusted with implementing the treaty in letter and spirit. This government will continue to carry out the orders of the World Bank which had a hand in imposing the sales tax and in increasing water prices for Jordan Valley irrigation. These taxes and increases are bound to put further burdens on the Jordanian citizens.

**Mifteh Lawzi**  
(Independent, Amman)

I congratulate (Prime Minister) Sharif Zeid and his government over the royal confidence invested in them wishing the government success in carrying out the duties assigned to it.

This stand of mine does not prevent me from expressing the following. As consultations were taking place to form this government, a large number of deputies focused all their attention on contacts and meetings, thus entering the swirl of the ministerial game, with each looking for a ministerial post for himself, regardless of the post, as if having it was the end goal and the target of legislative work. This situation reminds us of splitting booties and gains, and citizens were asking whether the deputies were elected to carry out their duties in monitoring the performance of the executive authority and to carry out their legislative duties, or to

have them queue for the magic ministerial post... What we have seen in the days which preceded the forming of the government... would in no way improve parliamentary performance. It would make deputies target ministerial posts, and this would in turn ruin the principle of separating the authorities. It also makes us dangerous more against this direction in our democratic march and prompts us to call for separating the two authorities in addition to asking the new governments to find another formula that secures them confidence on the basis of their programmes and plans in addition to the confidence of His Majesty, and not on the basis of having the largest number of deputies in government... I would like also to remind you that every time (some) deputies are made ministers, the number of those who are discontent will be more than those satisfied by this... But if we agree to the principle of having deputies joining governments, I would ask a question on how the ministerial posts are distributed to the deputies and in accordance with what scale? And why were some areas in the north and south of the Kingdom represented in the government, and Greater Amman, the heart of Jordan, was forgotten. I sincerely call for giving the deputies all the rights and privileges of ministers because that will make them carry out their roles at the house properly...

I trust that the government, with its head and members, will exert efforts to accomplish what is possible in this policy statement, in a way preserving the unity of the Jordanian family and the safety of the domestic front...

In conclusion, I urge the government to give special attention to domestic affairs and to revise the internal programmes and plans. I ask it also to give attention to citizens' demands, namely the residents of western Amman's suburbs... I also ask the government to revise the Election Law to achieve justice in taking into consideration population distribution and geographic factors. Last, may God grant the government strength in carrying out its duties...

## Relief supplies destined for Iraq

(Continued from page 2)

Permission, however, has been granted by the U.N. and the Jordanian government to transport the Indian collected medical relief via Amman to Iraq, Mr. Joseph said. A recent visit to Iraq by a British Red Cross delegation also expressed concern over the increasing number of deaths attributed to malnutrition and a lack of medicines, he said, adding that this organisation was also

arranging medicines to be taken to Iraq.

Mr. Joseph said the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) reported that many hospitals in Iraq were likely to be closed because of the lack of medicines and medical equipment.

Sheikh Mohammad, Mr. Joseph and Mr. Varghese will return from Iraq next Friday or Saturday to meet a further four plane loads of medicine

expected to arrive within the next two weeks.

The cost of transportation by Royal Jordanian from India to Amman has been met by donations, Mr. Joseph said. He declined to discuss the total cash of the relief supplies.

"There is no political motive... the medicines will be presented to the Iraqi authorities as a humanitarian gesture and a token of goodwill from the people of India," Mr. Joseph said.

## World Bank urges reform for Kuwait — consultancy

**KUWAIT (R)** — The World Bank has urged Kuwait to pursue privatisation, cut welfare state subsidies and maximise government savings to help diversify and strengthen its oil-based economy, an economics consultancy said Saturday.

The report, completed in late October, echoes numerous recommendations made in previous international consultants' surveys of the tiny Gulf oil-exporting state that were never implemented, Al Shall Consultants noted in a weekly review.

The bank's report, which

has not been made public, said Kuwait's main problems were the government's poor financial position following several years of large budget deficits, the government's excessive role in the state-orchestrated economy, distortions in the labour market, reliance on state subsidies for public services and economic dependence on oil.

"Despite its strictness, the report is balanced in its presentation and identification of problems," Shall said. It did not say how it had obtained the confidential document.

The budget deficit if untreated might "jeopardise currency stability and the free flow of funds," Shall reported the bank as saying. Policies such as subsidisation, protectionism and exempting Kuwaitis from a variety of financial obligations had "undermined the pillars of a free market economic environment."

"Probably the most important subject mentioned in the report was that the government, which guarantees the employment of Kuwaitis, does little or nothing to develop their productivity.

Thus, not only does the motive for work diminish but the human capital of Kuwait deteriorates," Shall said.

Ninety per cent of Kuwaitis work for the government.

The bank estimated the worth of the Reserve Fund for Future Generations (RFFG) — a government investment nest-egg meant to fund the country when oil runs out — at 11 billion dinars (\$37 billion), Shall said.

Assuming the budget deficit persisted at current levels and oil prices fell by only one cent a barrel, the fund could be depleted within

five years if it continued to be used to help cover the shortfall, Shall commented.

The government liquidated over half the RFFG to help pay for its 1991 Gulf war liberation and oilfield repairs.

"The report stresses the importance of a just distribution of wealth and income between present and future generations. It is essential to achieve an optimum level of savings to replenish the RFFG and offset fluctuations in oil revenues," Shall said. Finance Minister Nasser

Abdullah Al Rodhan said this month he plans to cut the Gulf war-inflated deficit by a third to one billion dinars (\$3.34 billion) in fiscal 1995/96 starting on July 1. The deficit in 1994/95 is projected at 1.502 billion dinars (\$5 billion).

The government plans to reduce subsidies on petrol and services such as water and electricity and increase customs levies but has given no details of the measures, likely to be unpopular with Kuwaitis used to government handouts.

## EU, Asian leaders see summit near

**DAVOS, Switzerland (R)** — A summit of European and Asian heads of government to discuss strengthening economic and political links is becoming more of a possibility, two key leaders from the regions said Saturday.

Jacques Santer, newly installed president of the European Union's (EU's) executive commission, told the World Economic Forum in Davos he saw such a gathering along lines of two similar Asia-Pacific summits being held "in the near future".

Singapore Prime Minister Goh Tok Chong, also speaking at the annual meeting of world business and political leaders in the Swiss mountain resort, said a Europe-Asia summit was "now a distinct possibility" within 10 to 16 months.

But the two men offered differing approaches to the issue of cooperation between their regions.

Mr. Santer, a former prime minister of Luxembourg who took over the top EU post this week, said the union "will continue to press for further market opening in many of the Asian-Pacific economies, some of whose markets remain impenetrably closed for financial services as well as goods."

"I believe the opening of the Asia-Pacific and South American regions, politically and economically, are an immense opportunity for the European Union to extend its influence in the world," he said.

"I therefore welcome and will encourage deeper political and economic ties with all countries in these regions. I welcome the call for a summit between the European Union and Asian leaders in the near future," Mr. Santer added.

Mr. Goh told the forum a dialogue between the two regions "will recognise our growing interdependence in a shrinking world."

He added: "It will educate both sides to accept the limits to which we can or should try to influence each other."

Rejecting calls from Europe and the United States for a link between labour conditions in emerging economies and trade rules, Mr. Goh said Asia "cannot achieve overnight the social standards that took decades and even centuries to achieve in Europe itself."

"Europe must accept this," he added. "Barely a century ago, the protectionist lobby in the U.S. raised a similar cry against what it called the 'pauper labour of Europe'."

Mr. Goh said Asia had no wish to see perpetuation of sweatshops and low wages.

Many U.S. and European politicians and labour leaders argue that such operations give the Asian economies an unfair trade advantage by making their goods cheaper.

But he said these conditions would continue to exist in Asian countries "as long as their supply of hungry, under-employed labour is plentiful."

Europe, he said, should engage the Asian states including China "in trade and investments that will enable them to grow rapidly, soak up their labour surpluses and provide higher value jobs."

Trade sanctions — which some critics of last year's GATT world trade accord have suggested — "will not raise wages and social conditions in developing countries to any artificially imposed norms, any more than they can raise their national incomes," Mr. Goh said.

## U.S. GDP

### Surges

**WASHINGTON (R)** — The U.S. economy grew at the strongest rate of the year during the final three months of 1994, the Commerce Department said Friday, posting its most vigorous expansion in a decade for the full year.

The nation's gross domestic product (GDP) expanded at a 4.5 per cent annual rate in the three months from October through December, up from 4.0 per cent in the third quarter.

Despite accelerating growth, inflation eased during the fourth quarter and was at historically low levels for all of 1994, with overall growth up four per cent for the full year.

The initial fourth-quarter GDP report, which will be revised twice in coming months, is the final look at the economy's performance before the Federal Reserve's policy-setting committee gathers next week to consider more interest-rate rises.

GDP measures the value of all goods and services produced by workers and capital within U.S. borders.

"It's pretty much the way (Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan) characterised it yesterday," said Northern Trust economist Paul Kasriel, referring to Mr. Greenspan's testimony Thursday before a congressional committee.

## Uncertainty grips Mexicans as U.S. lawmakers debate their economic future

**MEXICO CITY (Agencies)** — Uncertainty has become a daily reality for Mexicans as U.S. lawmakers in Washington debate their country's economic future.

Unemployment and prices have risen since the Mexican peso began its disastrous slide last month. Mexicans fear more lost jobs and even higher prices if American lawmakers don't approve a \$40 billion bailout package for their country.

"This is the reality of beautiful Mexico," Carlos Pena, a 54-year-old worker said as he watched small children begging money from motorists on a major Mexico City thoroughfare. "And the people are going to suffer even more."

Marches demanding salary increases or a government solution to the economic problem have become an almost daily occurrence along the smog-choked streets of the nation's capital since the peso lost 40 per cent of its value last month.

Millions of Mexican families are feeling the squeeze in this nation of some 90 million people as rates for telephone and electrical service have risen in recent weeks, along with the cost of basic foodstuffs like tortillas and milk.

President Clinton's \$40 billion loan guarantee package for Mexico is in serious trouble.

hile in the U.S. Congress because the administration has failed to convince the public it is needed, House Speaker Newt Gingrich said in Washington Friday.

Despite two days of high-profile lobbying by top administration officials, Mr. Gingrich said the proposal still had little support in Congress or in the country.

"The fact is the president has not succeeded in making a case for this. It is very unpopular in the country and it has not been explained very well," Mr. Gingrich told reporters.

Mr. Gingrich said he had talked by telephone with Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and planned to meet with him, possibly on Monday, to see how the proposal could be salvaged. He said a vote in the House was still possible next week.

Failure to approve the package could further erode already waning investor confidence in the Mexican economy and could trigger more jitters in the Mexican stock market, economists say.

Although most Mexicans back the loan guarantee package, they are wary of conditions some American lawmakers would like to attach to its approval.

The suggested conditions include forcing Mexico to cut its ties with Cuba, tighten its

policies on U.S.-bound immigration, and privatising the state oil monopoly Petroleos Mexicanos, better known as Pemex.

Meanwhile, four South American countries are set to offer a billion dollar aid package to the financially-troubled Mexican government, Brazil's ambassador in Washington announced Friday.

Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima said at a conference at the Brookings Institution that the details of the deal to be offered by Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Colombia were under discussion and would be announced soon.

The news followed Thursday's disclosure that the International Monetary Fund had all but given the nod to a \$7.8 billion standby loan for Mexico.

On the business side, Volkswagen has announced that it will cut 1,400 office employees — about 35 per cent of the entire administrative staff, Mexican news media reported Friday, quoting union officials.

The auto producer also has announced plans for another weeklong shutdown at the plant in central Mexico beginning Feb. 17, the union officials said.

Last year, Mexico's auto industry was the showcase of the nation's manufacturing sector, most of whose economies are agricultural-driven, invest in expanding production and make provisions for a safety food net for vulnerable populations.

tor, producing more than one million cars and trucks — half for export.

But now the nation's financial crisis is putting the brakes on domestic car sales, making auto workers some of the first and most visible victims of the Mexican peso's recent plunge.

Volkswagen, which makes 36 per cent of all cars sold in Mexico, closed its Mexican factory and sent 14,000 workers home this week because of an expected drop in car demand. Ford has closed an assembly plant in northern Mexico.

Nissan, the only Japanese automaker with a plant in Mexico, has announced it will lay off 1,000 workers beginning Monday. It also suspended delivery of U.S.-made cars to Mexico.

Volkswagen officials expect last year's sale of 160,000 cars inside Mexico to fall 30 to 50 per cent this year.

Even if they keep their jobs, Mexican auto workers will have to fight for salary increases, whose purchasing power has returned to 1980's levels.

Before the devaluation, auto manufacturers paid an average of \$2 an hour in salary, benefits and taxes for Mexican workers, compared to the \$40 an hour cost of U.S. workers.

## Economists nominate academic as WTO head

**LONDON (R)** — Leading economists Friday put forward Indian-born U.S. academic Jagdish Bhagwati as their alternative candidate to head the new World Trade Organisation (WTO).

In a bid to break a deadlock over who is to lead the world's main trade watchdog, 23 professors from universities in the United States, Sweden, Japan and Belgium together with Yale University's Economic Growth Centre nominated Dr. Bhagwati, professor of trade economics at Columbia University.

In a letter in Friday's Financial Times newspaper, they said, "among the possible candidates, we would recommend particularly Professor Jagdish Bhagwati."

The WTO succeeded the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) on Jan. 1. It so far has 76 member states, who have been unable to agree on a WTO leader.

The formal candidates are ex-Italian trade minister Renato Ruggiero, the candidate for the European Union, South Korean international trade ambassador Kim Chul-Su for the Asia-Pacific countries and ex-president Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico.

In their letter the economists argued Dr. Bhagwati was an ideal candidate, committed to multilateral trade, sensitive to threats to it, and able to provide forceful leadership on it.

"Bhagwati would appear to be a candidate that India and the United States could cosponsor. We hope they will," they said.

Dr. Bhagwati, now a U.S. citizen, has successfully argued against imposing import targets on Japan and threatening trade retaliation as part of U.S. efforts to open up the Japanese markets to foreign imports, they said.

Dr. Bhagwati worked at GATT, the WTO's predecessor, as economic policy adviser to then director-general Arthur Dunkel.

## Southern African states need money for food stocks

**LILONGWE (R)** — Southern African states, plagued by periodic drought and reduced crop harvests, are looking for nearly \$45 million to fund a project to help boost food security in the region.

The project is aimed at helping the 11 Southern African Development Community (SADC) states build up stocks of staple foodstuffs to meet deficits and promote intra-regional trade to cut down dependency on costly imports.

"The food security programme consists of 10 projects valued at \$63.17 million of which \$18.27 million has been secured, leaving a funding gap of \$44.9 million," said a report being con-

sidered by community officials in the Malawian capital Lilongwe ahead of the group's meeting with donors next Friday.

It said \$30 million of the amount being sought was for the establishment of a regional food reserve as a hedge against shortfalls during droughts and natural disasters.

Drought in 1991/1992 forced countries in the region to import more than seven million tonnes of cereal and current projections indicate the region may have to import 3.74 million tonnes to meet expected shortfalls in the 1994/95 marketing year ending this May.

The report said the food

reserve project would involve the creation of a fund in readily convertible currency and a market information system to which all SADC countries would have access.

"At the request of registered buyers in the region, whether by member state governments, parastatal organisations, commodity brokers or donor agencies, the fund will source, reserve and or procure maize (the region's staple food)," it said.

"Preferably, such maize will be surplus production available in the region. If buyers are constrained by a shortage of foreign exchange, loan capital can be advanced from the fund in order to conclude procurement con-

tracts," the report explained. Loans from the fund would have to be repaid to maintain its seed capital.

SADC — comprising Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa — see the project as essential particularly in the event of food emergencies when a rapid response is crucial.

While the project would initially deal with maize, it is envisaged that an expansion of capital in the reserve fund would allow other staple food commodities to be handled in a similar manner.

The report said it was imperative that Southern Afri-

can states, most of whose economies are agricultural-driven, invest in expanding production and make provisions for a safety food net for vulnerable populations.

Agriculture employs up to 80 per cent of the total labour force in the region and funds up to 30 per cent of its foreign exchange earnings.

The report said the performance of the agricultural sector in most member states had been "rather disappointing," pointing out production had never equalled population demand and was unlikely to do so in the next few years.

Total demand for maize was projected to grow to about 70 million tonnes in 2025 from 27 million 1987.

## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



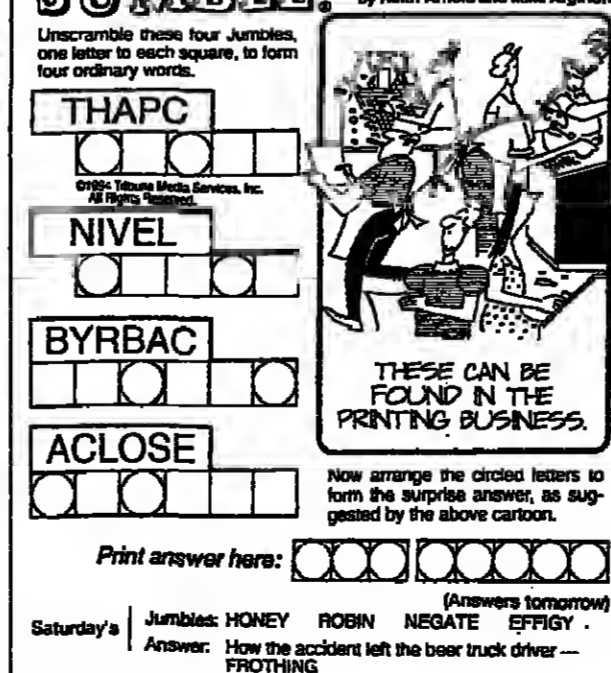
## Mutt'n'Jeff



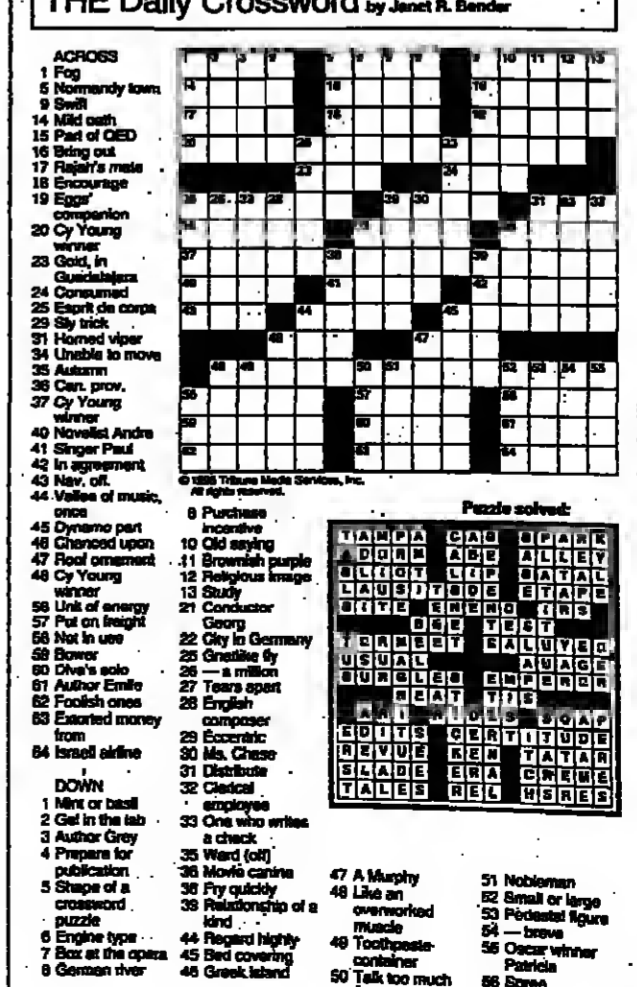
## THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



## JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME



## THE Daily Crossword by Janet R. Bender



## Japan regains shipbuilding title

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan regained the position of the world's top shipbuilding nation from South Korea last year on a 64.1 per cent increase in orders over the previous year, an industry report has said.

The 1994 orders totalled 9.92 million deadweight tonnes, the highest annual volume for Japan since the 1973 global oil crisis, surpassing 6.37 million tonnes for South Korea, the Japan Ship Exporters Association said.

It was the first time for three years that Japan had overtaken South Korea in contracts before South Korean rivals had stepped up sales following the expansion of facilities, the association said, adding that it expected tougher competition in the current year.

"This year, the annual level won't be so high as last year," said Yuichi Watanabe, the association's executive director.

The annual volume in

tonnage rose for the second straight year, reflecting a recovery in ship prices after a two-year slump, the association said.

In 1994, Japanese shipbuilders received orders for 259 ships, up from the previous year's 165, including 55 freighters (1.73 million tonnes) and 148 bulk carriers (4.91 million tonnes).

In December alone, they received orders for 31 ships (1.06 million tonnes), up from 15 ships (\$21,440 tonnes) a year earlier.

## Hong Kong seen handling 70% of world watch trade — in time

TOKYO (AFP) — Global watch output levelled off last year, depressed by flat production in world leaders Japan and Hong Kong, which offset increased output in Switzerland, Citizen Watch Co. Ltd. said Friday.

The world's largest watchmaker also said Hong Kong's role as an intermediary centre for the global watch trade would continue to grow, eventually making it responsible for handling about 70 per cent of all watches.

In its annual review of the world watch industry, Citizen said global production grew 0.4 per cent to an estimated 1.07 billion pieces last year. Japanese output edged up 0.3 per cent to 392 million pieces and Hong Kong's production was unchanged at 345 million pieces.

Swiss production grew 12.5

per cent from a year earlier to 155 million pieces but watch production elsewhere dropped 4.9 per cent to 195 million pieces, depressed by declining output in other European countries.

"Production of chablon (parts) and movements of analog watches were further concentrated in Japan and Switzerland," the company said. "On the other hand, production of completed watches is further expanding in China and other South East Asian countries."

In Japan, the output of analog quartz watches grew five per cent to 350 million pieces while the production of digital quartz watches plunged 27 per cent to 22 million pieces. Japan's output of mechanical watches also declined, tumbling 30 per cent to 14 million pieces.

Citizen said the value of Japanese production was also down sharply, falling 11 per cent from a year earlier to 273 billion yen (\$2.7 billion).

"This drop was due to the decrease in the proportion of completed watches and that of the average unit sales price," the survey said.

In Hong Kong, the company noted that digital watches exported from the British colony were "almost always" produced under subcontract in China, along with more than half of the casing work for completed analog watches.

"Hong Kong's role as an intermediary trade centre will grow in the future, making it responsible for the intermediary handling of approximately 70 per cent of the world's watches," the company said. In Switzerland, despite the

strong increase in production volumes, the value of production "seems to have increased only slightly," Citizen said.

"The increase in the number of pieces is due to an increase in chablon and movements, although the number of completed watches decreased due to a slowdown in sales of plastic-cased watches. Exports to South East Asian countries in particular increased, accounting for more than 50 per cent of total exports," the company added.

Citizen said the small increase in the value of Swiss production reflected favourable sales of watches with precious metal cases. Production of such watches grew an estimated six per cent by volume and eight per cent by value.

## Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

## Ministry of Public Works lists projects for this year

★ The Ministry of Public Works is about to invite tenders to build a ring-road around Amman. Tenders will also be invited soon to build a seven-kilometre, four-lane ring-road around Salt. The Salt project, the completion of which is expected in 1997, is estimated to cost JD 2 million. Other projects to be carried out soon are: (1) A JD 7 million, 20-kilometre, four-lane road linking Aqaba-port-Durrah-Saudi border; (2) Maintenance of the Amman-Queen Alia International Airport (JD 6 million); (3) Opening a six-kilometre additional entrance to the airport from Al Qastal to serve air cargo operations; (4) a new road linking Wadi Mousa to Taybeh; (5) expanding the Amman-Um Al Amad-Madaba road to become a four-lane, 17.5-kilometre highway (JD 9 million) — completion expected in 1998; (6) Rebuilding and expanding the Zarqa-Yajouz - Al Jubetha road for a 20-kilometre length (JD 10 million); (7) Expanding the main road between Karak and Qatraneh to become four lanes (JD 20 million); (8) Continuing the construction on the Kufur Yuba-Deir Abu Saeed-North Shouneir road (JD 6 million) (Al Ra'i).

★ It is expected that over the coming few days the Cabinet will order the liquidation of the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO) and the transfer of its functions to the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC). The role and the functions of the Farmers Federation will also be transferred to the ACC. The liquidation process will first take up the Cooperative Bank which will be totally dissolved along with its 100 staff employees. The 550 employees at the JCO will either be relocated at other government institutions or be dismissed and referred to the social security ranks (Al Dustour).

★ The 1995 budgets of 20 independent government departments envisage JD 388.3 million in revenues, JD 11 million more than the figure for 1994. Recurrent spending of the 20 budgets combined is projected at JD 275.3 million while capital spending is estimated at JD 220.3 million, an increase of JD 6.3 million and JD 32 million respectively over the 1994 figures. As such, the projected deficit of the 20 independent departments amounts to JD 107.3 million in 1995 compared to JD 79.2 million deficit in 1994. The departments are expected to borrow JD 85.9 million (JD 38.9 million internal borrowing and JD 47 million external borrowing) this year. Financial support from the central government as well as loans and other saving measures will be used to cover the projected deficit (Al Ra'i).

★ The Economic Consultative Council has been restructured and now includes: The prime minister (president), and the ministers of education, finance, transport, industry and trade, planning, public works, supply, agriculture, labour, energy, tourism and irrigation. Other members are the governor of the Central Bank, the head of the Social Security Corporation, the economic adviser at the Prime Ministry, presidents of industry and commerce chambers, presidents of the business, banks and insurance associations, president of the Farmers Federation, the contractors' association chief, the secretary-general of the Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions, president of the Consumers Protection Society, the Amman Financial Market head and Messrs: Sabih Al Masri, Khalil Talbouni, Jawad Hadid, Munther Al Share' and Eha Nuql (Al Aswag).

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
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TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170				
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 28/01/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	NEW CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE
ARAB BANK	560	103470	104,500	1,030
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	4380	19357	4,420	4,420
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	1260	5362	4,270	4,220
BANK OF JORDAN	9478	34119	4,650	3,600
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	62	176	2,850	2,850
THE HOUSING BANK	7700	46895	6,180	6,050
JORDAN KOWAT BANK	10799	10799	3,040	3,050
JORDAN GULF BANK	1450	2288	1,880	1,550
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	19129	75492	3,370	3,320
UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	100	810	5,100	5,100
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	25480	36656	2,440	2,390
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	1136	4773	4,200	4,150
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	1250	2000	1,600	1,500
<b>SANXS SECTOR</b>	<b>76101</b>	<b>341895</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 159,22</b>	<b>CHANGE: -0.12</b>
<b>UNITED INSURANCE</b>	<b>2750</b>	<b>7838</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>2,850</b>
<b>INSURANCE SECTOR</b>	<b>2750</b>	<b>7838</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 136,68</b>	<b>CHANGE: -0.007</b>
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	30581	47552	1,550	1,560
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	12400	18228	1,480	1,470
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	150	750	5,050	5,000
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	6921	23376	3,280	3,370
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	5000	11500	2,290	2,300
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	2000	9340	1,190	1,150
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	7100	16972	2,400	2,390
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	2200	7913	3,600	3,600
<b>SERVICES SECTOR</b>	<b>72468</b>	<b>135768</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 133,17</b>	<b>CHANGE: -0.12</b>
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	10657	31454	2,950	2,950
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	240	1222	5,150	5,100
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	2179	20917	9,610	9,600
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	163	672	4,200	4,150
THE JORDAN WOODEN MILLS	3400	26716	7,900	7,850
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	2966	15258	5,150	5,130
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	625	3844	6,250	6,150
JORDAN DAIRY	133	301	2,300	2,270
JORDANIAN TYRES MANUFACTURING	2400	6430	2,700	2,650
SPINNING & WEAVING	200	520	2,630	2,580
RAFIA INDUSTRIES	2073	5712	2,770	2,750
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	4800	4849	1,020	1,010
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	779	5460	7,100	7,000
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	36620	3128	810	850
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	1950	2752	1,430	1,410
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	500	2050	4,150	4,100
INDUSTRIAL PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	200	513	2,620	2,580
ALADIN INDUSTRIES	1000	4400	4,480	4,350
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/INCO	650	520	810	800
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	2322	6222	2,710	2,680
RAVIER INVESTMENT	2000	3600	1,750	1,800
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	1200	5003	4,170	4,150
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	4999	11025	2,220	2,200
<b>INDO-PACIFIC SECTOR</b>	<b>82056</b>	<b>190803</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 126,68</b>	<b>CHANGE: -0.16</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>233375</b>	<b>676303</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 144,16</b>	<b>CHANGE: -0.212</b>
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET			184198	
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET			223968	

## Palestinian industries depend on Israel

By Khattab Salman  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Raw materials for the industrial sector in Gaza and the West Bank are imported largely from Israel, and most of the production is marketed in Israel, according to a study conducted by the Centre for Jewish-Arab Economic Development.

The study conducted last year and covered every Palestinian industrial installation with more than 15 employees, indicated that 78 per cent of the installations are industrial, 13 per cent are in foodstuff manufacturing, one per cent agricultural, and nine per cent are of other specialties.

The study reported that 59

per cent of the raw materials needed for Palestinian industries are imported from Israel, 16.4 per cent from abroad, and 24.6 per cent are available locally. At the same time 35 per cent of Palestinian producers market an average of 2.5 per cent of their production in Israel, and that 50 per cent are dependent mainly on the Israeli market.

The study, which explored the impact of the interim period on Palestinian industries, showed that currently only 11.8 per cent of these industries are operating with 90-100 per cent of their full capacity — 2.6 per cent with 50-60 per cent, 35 per cent with 60-80 per cent, and 23.1 per cent with less than 50 per

cent of their full capacity. The study explained that these low levels of production are due to huge competition because of similar products.

According to the study, the machinery of these industries are 92.5 per cent imported from abroad, 5.6 per cent from Israel and one per cent are manufactured locally in Gaza and the West Bank.

The industrial installations are 52 per cent privately/individually owned, 31 per cent goes in partnership of two or three owners, and 17 per cent are corporated.

The major problems facing Palestinian industries, according to the study, are capitals, especially fixed expenses, then comes raw

materials and marketing. The study also indicated that the cost of production in the West Bank is lower than that in Israel, but it is even lower in Gaza than the West Bank.

Concerning anticipated growth, the study estimated that the rate would reach 65 per cent in the first year, 16 per cent in the second, and 10 per cent in the third year.

69.2 per cent Palestinian industrialists expected positive impacts if a free zone was established, 75.9 per cent were ready to cooperate with Israeli companies through common marketing, subcontracting and joint ventures. Currently 52.8 per cent of Palestinian producers are subcontracting with Israeli producers.

## Iranian cleric: Lash crooked capitalists, officials

NICOSIA (AP) — Amid a growing outcry against corruption in Iran, a senior cleric called on the Tehran government Friday to lash capitalists and government officials who enrich themselves through graft and illegal dealings.

"There's no other way to deal with such people," Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati said in a weekly sermon at Tehran University which was broadcast by Tehran Radio and monitored in Cyprus.

Ayatollah Jannati, a close aide of spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said that a number of capitalists had recently driven up

gold prices by buying up government-issued gold coins and causing a shortage on the market.

Journalists in Tehran said that gold prices had doubled over the last few weeks.

Ayatollah Jannati said there were some who were making millions overnight, while most of Iran's 60 million people do not even have enough to eat.

"More and more luxury cars are being imported every day, and being driven past those who don't even own a bicycle," said Ayatollah Jannati, a member of several key

government committees.

Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution was supposed to close the divide between rich and poor. But more than 15 years later, the rich are growing richer and while the poor — who make up the bulk of the population — sink deeper into poverty.

President Hashemi Rafsanjani and Ayatollah Khamenei have both warned that corrupt officials as well as hoarders and profiteers will be prosecuted.

Late last year, in response to growing public dissatisfaction with deteriorating eco-

nomic conditions, President Rafsanjani announced yet another crackdown on shopkeepers and businessmen making a killing on the market.

But judging by the remarks made by Ayatollah Jannati, who said that prices are still rising, the drive has been less than successful.

Ayatollah Jannati criticised the government for being soft on capitalists and other wrongdoers, and called on the judiciary to order floggings, which is widely practised in Iran and some other Muslim countries.

## Financial Markets

Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Jan 26/1/95	New York Close Jan 27/1/95
Sterling Pound	1.5905	1.5895
Deutsche Mark	1.5178	1.5150
Swiss Franc	1.2760	1.2756
French Franc	5.2550	5.2595
Japanese Yen	99.45	99.38
European Currency Unit	1.2450	1.2463

1 USD Per SDR  
1 SDR Composed of 16.67 ECU

European Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.75	6.06	6.50	7.12
Sterling Pound	6.00	6.37	6.81	7.56
Deutsche Mark	4.68	4.81	5.06	5.50
Swiss Franc	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.37
French Franc	5.51	5.50	5.57	6.45
Japanese Yen	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.16
European Currency Unit	5.71	5.98	6.32	6.93

Interest rates are for months ending U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Previous Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	377.25	7.60	Silver	4.68	0.111

21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6970	0.6990
Sterling Pound	1.1056	1.1111
Deutsche Mark	0.4597	0.4620
Swiss Franc	0.5460	0.5487
French Franc	0.1324	0.1331
Japanese Yen	0.7017	0.7052
Dutch Guilder	0.4100	0.4120
Swedish Krona	*****	*****
Italian Lira	0.0434	0.0436
Belgian Franc	*****	*****

Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8330	1.8350
Lebanese Lira	0.041885	0.042845
Saudi Riyal	0.1652	0.1664
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3150	2.3250
Qatari Riyal	0.1902	0.1915
Egyptian Pound	0.2002	0.2140
Omani Riyal	1.8810	1.8120
UAE Dirham	0.1892	0.1906
Greek Drachma	0.2785	0.3265
Cypriot Pound	1.4145	1.5328

Per 100

## Jordan Times

Tel: 667171

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## NFL Super Bowl a multi-media circus Chargers discount predictions of blowout

MIAMI (Agencies) — Don't think of it as a football game. Think of it as a multi-media event, a 10-ring jamboree with jocks, jugglers, dancers and snakes, and 135,000 slices of pepperoni pizza.

Welcome to the Super Bowl. America's answer to the bread and circuses of millenia past. The best (or at least the most) of Hollywood-style hype and techno-glitz from a country never known as the world's wall flower.

The official purpose of the gathering is the championship game Sunday between the San Francisco 49ers and San Diego Chargers. But with all signs pointing to a boring 49ers rout, National Football League officials have gone into over-

drive on the hoopla front.

A week of non-stop partying and corporate promotion will be capped by a full bill of entertainment wrapped around the three-hour game at Joe Robbie Stadium, which will be televised to 750 million people in 174 countries.

Pre-game festivities will include Latin pop idol Sergio Mendes and country music star Hank Williams Jr. The national anthem will be sung by Kathie Lee Gifford with Heather Whitestone, the first deaf Miss America, performing it in sign language.

For the traditional half-time show, the NFL has brought in the heavy artillery: Walt Disney Attractions will stage a three-act Indiana

Jones adventure titled "The Temple of the Forbidden Eye."

More than 1,000 performers will take the field here, including tumblers, rock and belly dancers, firebreathers and snake charmers, for the gala headlined by singers Tony Bennett and Patti LaBelle.

While providing a visual feast on the field, Super Bowl organizers are readying a glut of the delight for the 75,000 fans in the stands, with such local delicacies as stuffed yuca and Cuban pastries.

They are also preparing 20,000 pretzels, 6,000 pounds of chicken, 40,000 hot dogs and 135,000 slices of pizza which can be washed down with 18,600 gallons of keg beer and 5,000 cases of canned brew that will be on hand.

The extravaganza has even spilled over outside the stadium where the league has mounted a 650,000 square feet (59,000 square metre) theme park called "The NFL Experience."

The park provides more than 50 interactive exhibits, inviting youths and the not-so-young to test their running, passing or playcalling skills, get their picture taken in football garb, and spend money.

Above all, spend money. Under a yawning tent, football and other sports merchandisers have laid out a mind-boggling array of goods for sale, including no less than 18 different styles of Super Bowl T-shirts, jerseys, jackets and helmets.

You can buy signed footballs, player statues, posters, commemorative milk caps, pins, mugs, table tops, trading cards, and other items carrying the coveted NFL logo.

The league estimates that it sold some \$3 billion worth of merchandise in 1993, compared to \$2.8 billion for baseball and \$2.1 billion for U.S. pro basketball.

Vendors hoped to rake in some \$25 million around the Super Bowl alone. And the

league sees only more boom times ahead for its merchandising arm, NFL properties.

"The game continues to achieve higher levels of prosperity which translates to the success of products bearing NFL teams and logos," said Jim Connelly, vice president of worldwide retail licensing.

### Chargers confident

The San Diego Chargers discount predictions of a Super Bowl blowout. They expect that San Francisco will be able to stay close.

The Chargers are saying they plan to win. Odds-makers, on the other hand, say the 49ers will fleece, flatten, trounce, trample, thrash, bash, blitz, berate, defeat, confuse, abuse and defuse the Chargers.

San Francisco is favoured by 19 points — the largest point spread in Super Bowl history. That means a final score of 26-7, or 39-20, our 50-31.

The Chargers may be the only people in America who think they can win.

"According to the national news, we're not supposed to be here," San Diego linebacker Junior Seau said.

"All it does is show you're not respected, and you're not to the level where you should be respected yet. To get that, you have to do something rare. That's to win the Super Bowl."

It should be noted that the previous largest Super Bowl point spread was 18 points, and in that game, the underdogs won. Quarterback Joe Namath and the New York Jets pulled off an upset he guaranteed, beating Baltimore 16-7 in 1969 at Miami.

With the lack of news, media questions keep coming back to one subject — the unprecedented point spread.

"I don't like it," 49ers coach George Seifert said. "It demonstrates disrespect for San Diego. There must be something special about them, or they wouldn't be here."



San Diego Chargers running back Eric Bienemy stretches out during the Chargers team practice (AFP photo)

"To me, it wouldn't be an upset if we come out and win the game," Chargers running back Natrone Means said. "We're capable of winning."

But don't bet on it. All signs point in favour of the 49ers.

They led the National Football League in scoring and eliminated two-time defending league champion Dallas to reach the Super Bowl for the fifth time since 1982. The Chargers, picked by some to finish last in the AFC West, struggled after a 6-0 start and needed desperate rallies in both playoff games to earn their first Super Bowl berth.

"The 49ers have had a lot more success than we've had in the past," San Diego quarterback Stan Humphries said. "But we're both here now, and it all comes down to Sunday."

The Chargers are bucking not only 49ers tradition, but

National Football Conference tradition as well. The conference has won 10 consecutive Super Bowls.

At this point, it's fair to wonder whether an AFC team could beat Tampa Bay in the Super Bowl. Recent NFC victories have been by such margins as 45, 36, 35, 32 and 22 points.

And none of those teams was favoured by 19.

"It's not really a slam on the talent we have," San Diego linebacker David Griggs said with a shrug. "It's an indication of what the AFC has done the last 10 years. I think the media is looking at the AFC as a 19-point underdog, and not looking at the Chargers as 19-point underdogs."

"We're not saying it should be even up. We're underdogs. But they can't take the 19-point spread, take the trophy and go home. They've got to beat us."

## Pippen unapologetic over suspension

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Chicago Bulls forward Scottie Pippen, fined and suspended for throwing a chair after being ejected from a National Basketball Association game Tuesday, said his only regret is that he hadn't tossed the referee instead of the chair.

Pippen sat out the Chicago Bulls' 102-99 loss to the Orlando Magic Thursday night and will pay a \$6,000 fine for his tantrum in a game in Chicago against the San Antonio Spurs.

"I wish I had not thrown that chair onto the court. I wish that chair had been the referee instead," Pippen said, according to Friday's Chicago Sun-Times.

Pippen was ejected after twice calling the referee's attention to what he believed were 3-second violations by the Spurs' Dennis Rodman.

Pippen said he was angry because he wasn't abusive in talking to the refs and his ejection probably cost the Bulls the game.

"I threw the chair because I felt I might as well get my money's worth," Pippen told the Sun-Times. "Joe is one of those guys who just tries to intimidate you with his whistle."

Pippen made his comments Thursday after being named to the NBA All-Star team.

Pippen, who leads the Bulls in nearly every statistical category served his suspension as his teammates blew an 11-point lead in their loss to the Magic.

The Pippen-led Bulls blew out Orlando earlier this month 109-77, a game in which the star forward had 26 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds.

"We lost this ball game and we should have won it," Bulls guard B.J. Armstrong said. "We just came up short and weren't able to close them out."

Mavs forward gets new tests

Roy Tarpley's right knee is bothering him, he's unhappy with his playing time and he's having mood swings. But the reason the Dallas Mavericks forward will

undergo a battery of tests from aftercare counselors the next few days is not drug-related, Tarpley and his agent George Andrews said Thursday.

"They said I haven't failed any tests," said Tarpley, who since returning from two years in the Greek league is tested daily for drug and alcohol use. "But I didn't need to be told that. I already knew. I've been telling you guys that all along."

Still, Tarpley's aftercare counselors, led by Dr. Lloyd Baccus of Atlanta, want to know why the 2.13-meter (7-foot-0) center-forward has reportedly behaved erratically before and during several Mavericks games the past month.

"I'm not sure what kind of things they're planning to do," Tarpley said. "They're supposed to be getting back to me. It's another of these things I have to do. I guess they're going to pick me apart and put me back together."

Keith Grant, Mavericks director of player personnel, said he can't comment on the aftercare, but added that Tarpley's sore knee could force him to go on the injured list and miss at least five games. He's sat out the last six.

"If he's not in compliance of his aftercare programme, I'm sure the league will take appropriate action," Grant said.

Tarpley returned to the NBA season after serving three years of a lifetime ban for violating the league's substance abuse policy. He's averaging 25 minutes in 26 of Dallas' 38 games.

When asked about his behaviour and feelings lately, Tarpley asked, "who doesn't have mood swings?"

"This has been a rap about me forever. At least, I'm able to laugh about it now. To a point."

### Results

Boston 117, Golden State 91  
Phoenix 108, Philadelphia 107  
Portland 87, Cleveland 77  
Charlotte 105, New York 90  
Miami 96, Milwaukee 87  
Minnesota 102, Dallas 94  
Denver 96, New Jersey 90



San Diego Chargers starting quarterback Stan Humphries looks to pass as quarterback Gale Gilbert (background) does the same 27 January at the Dolphins Training Facility in Davie, Fla. The Chargers will take on the NFC Champion San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl XXIX January 29 in Miami (AFP photo)

## First 1995 Grand Prix car revealed

SILVERSTONE, England (AFP) — The first Grand Prix car built to the radical 1995 rules, a Jordan Peugeot 195, was unveiled here Friday, with designer Gary Anderson predicting the season would see "a lot more, better and more spectacular racing."

The new rules cut engine size from 3.5 to 3 litres and radically change the aerodynamics to slow the cars and improve driver safety.

Teams have "basically all had to start our aerodynamic research programmes again," said Anderson. He said it should be good "because it's brought everybody back to the same starting point and the racing should be closer."

The cars should also put greater emphasis on driver skill because they will have less downforce and will tend to slide more through corners, he said.

The new car was only finished hours before the roll-out. "It was up until 6 a.m. today helping build it," Anderson said.

Peugeot has joined Jordan for a three-year contract, having been dropped by McLaren after only one year. France's Total oil company have also joined up, and team owner Eddie Jordan said the new backing had enabled them to start a separate test team for faster development of the new car.

It will run for the first time next week, weather permitting, at the Silverstone track opposite the Jordan factory. Drivers will again be Brazilian Rubens Barrichello and Eddie Irvine from Northern Ireland. Jordan pointing out that his was the only team apart from Ferrari to have retained the same drivers from last year.

"It was an easy choice," he said, noting Barrichello last year became the youngest driver ever to win a pole position while Irvine had scored Championships points after a difficult Formula One debut.

"Both could win races this year," Jordan said.

"Everything is now in place for 1995, and I think the combination presents us with our best opportunity yet for success. I'm extremely excited about the year ahead."

Jordan, Anderson and other members of the team are Irish, and backing for the team from the Irish Ministry of Tourism and Trade will continue for a second year, announced the new minister, Enda Kenny.

He said the team would be used to support Irish tourism and trade in the countries where the 16 Grands Prix are held.

Jordan noted that last year his team, using the Hart engine from a small specialist builder, had already been able to compete with the "Big Four" — Benetton Ford, Williams Renault, McLaren Peugeot and Ferrari.

"We took our first pole, podiums, and led races," he said, predicting an even closer fight with the Big Four this season.

"We blew away the Ferrari last year," added Irvine with a grin. "This year, if we're lucky, we could have a win."

The new car, with a bodywork sweeping dramatically to a narrow rear, features a seven-speed semi-automatic gearbox which Anderson said can change from 7th to 1st gear in 0.15 seconds — "you don't pay a penalty any more for having seven gears."

The system enables Peugeot to increase power at the top of the range of the new 3 litre engine, which was installed in the new car but has not yet been run in anger.

The clutch is operated by hand, with only brake and accelerator pedals.

Formula One drivers for 1995

1. Michael Schumacher (Germany/Benetton-Renault)
2. Johnny Herbert (GB/Benetton-Renault)
3. Ukyo Katayama (Japan/Tyrrell-Yamaha)
4. To Be Announced (Tyrrell-Yamaha)
5. Damon Hill (GB/Williams-Renault)
6. David Coulthard (GB/Williams-Renault)
7. TBA (McLaren-Mercedes)
8. Mika Hakkinen (Finland/McLaren-Mercedes)
9. TBA (Footwork-Hart)
10. TBA (Footwork-Hart)
11. Hideki Noda (Japan/Simtek-Ford)
12. TBA (Simtek-Ford)
13. Rubens Barrichello (Brazil/Jordan-Peugeot)
14. Eddie Irvine (Ireland/Jordan-Peugeot)
15. TBA (Pacific-Ford)
16. TBA (Pacific-Ford)
17. TBA (Pacific-Ford)
18. TBA (Larrousse-Ford)
19. Erik Comas (France/Larrousse-Ford)
20. Pedro Diniz (Brazil/Forzi-Ford)
21. TBA (Forzi-Ford)
22. TBA (Forzi-Ford)
23. Pierluigi Martini (Italy/Minardi)
24. Luca Badoer (Italy/Ligier-Mugen Honda)
25. TBA (Ligier-Mugen Honda)
26. Olivier Panis (France/Ligier-Mugen Honda)
27. Jean Alesi (France/Ferrari)
28. Gerhard Berger (Austria/Ferrari)
29. Karl Wendlinger (Austria/Sauber-Ford)
30. Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Germany/Sauber-Ford)

### SPORTS IN BRIEF

#### Vienna and Paris host European finals

GENEVA (AFP) — Vienna and Paris will host the European Cup and Cup Winners Cup finals respectively, European football's ruling body UEFA announced Friday. Five years after AC Milan's 1-0 victory over Benfica, the Austrian capital will yet again host the continent's showpiece event on May 24. And the Parc des Princes in Paris will entertain the European Cup Winners Cup finalists on May 10, even if French club Auxerre reach the final, UEFA confirmed. The French capital last staged a final in 1975 when Bayern Munich beat Leeds 2-0 in the European Cup.

#### McKoy sets European 50-metre hurdles record

MOSCOW (AP) — Olympic champion Mark McKoy set a European record in the 50-metre hurdles Friday at the Nike-Seldom World Class competition, Russia's premier indoor track and field meet. McKoy, who competed in the Olympics for Canada but last year received Austrian citizenship, was timed in 6.39 seconds. McKoy, the 1992 Olympic gold medalist in the 110-metre hurdles and the 1993 world indoor champion in the 60-metre hurdles, is the world indoor record-holder for the 50 hurdles at 6.25, set in 1986 when he was competing for Canada. Sergei Bubka of Ukraine, the only pole vaulter ever to clear 20 feet (6 metres), indoors or outdoors, made his first appearance in Moscow of the post-Soviet era. He won at 19-0 1/4 (5.7 metres), then missed at 19-8 1/2 (5.9 metres). Dennis Mitchell of the United States, the world's top-ranked 100-metre sprinter, finished third in the 50-metre dash, 0.12 seconds behind Canadian Bruny Surin's winning time of 5.64. Frankie Fredericks of Namibia was second at 5.74.

#### Romario leaves to boos on Brazilian return

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Brazilian soccer star Romario made a disappointing return to South American football on Friday, withdrawing to boos after 75 minutes of his new side Flamengo's 1-1 draw in a friendly with Uruguay. Romario, bought by the Rio Club for \$4.5 million from Barcelona of Spain earlier this month, appeared unfit and failed to create any clear scoring chances before leaving the field complaining of a sore elbow. A crowd of 47,000 in the city of Goiania in Brazil's interior flocked to see the return of the striker voted the best player of the 1994 World Cup. But it was young striker Nelo who gave Flamengo the lead after 15 minutes. After hitting the woodwork three times, an understrength Uruguay equalised with eight minutes remaining through Dorta. Romario's World Cup winning team mate Branco, who also signed for Flamengo this month, seemed to struggle playing in midfield and was substituted halfway into the second half.



Volunteer helpers of the planned Skiing World Championships listen to an announcement of not take place (AFP photo)

## Gloom hits Sierra Nevada after cancellation of championship

SIERRA NEVADA (R) — Friday brought clear skies and brilliant sunshine to Spain's Sierra Nevada but organisers of the 1995 Alpine Skiing World Championships, postponed on Thursday until next year, were in sombre mood.

"I've felt better than I do this morning," Jeronimo Paez, head of the Spanish organising committee, said on Friday as the arduous job of dismantling the championship village began.

It's impossible to say how much has been lost but it won't be cheap," he said. "It depends how good we are at managing things in the coming year."

Paez said \$350 million had been ploughed into infrastructure projects in Andalusia, traditionally one of Spain's poorest regions and the area of the country hardest hit by recent years of drought.

Some 70 per cent of that

money was spent in Granada while the rest went to Sierra Nevada itself, he said.

Artificial snow, churned out daily throughout January in a desperate attempt to cover parched pistes, cost organisers \$25 million alone.

But Paez insisted the majority of costs would be recouped when the championships return to Andalusia in a year's time.

"This was an investment in the resort. The championships are the catalyst for the investment and ... the

main thing is we still have them here next year," he said.

"We have insurance to cover the main cost of preparations and most of the sponsors we have will not cause us problems."

The championships, postponed here after two months of crippling water shortages in which only a sprinkling of snow has fallen on the Sierra's highest peaks, were to have brought almost 500 competitors to Spain from 48 national teams.

### FURNISHED FLAT FOR RENT

1. Ground floor consisting of 2 bedrooms and one small room with salon, dining room and kitchen, front and back gardens. With private telephone and central heating.

2. We have a small flat consisting of one bedroom, dining room, salon, bathroom, and kitchen with central heating and a garden.

Location: Shmeisani near the former Yugoslav Embassy.

Tel.: 661658

Cinema	Tel.: 634144	Cinema	Tel.: 699238	Cinema	Tel.: 677420	Cinema	Tel.: 618274 - 618275	Cinema	Tel.: 675571	Cinema	Tel.: 625155
<b>PHILADELPHIA</b>		<b>FLORA</b>		<b>CONCORD</b>		<b>AMMOUN THEATRE</b>		<b>Nabil Al Mashini Theatre</b>		<b>AHLAN THEATRE</b>	
Jim Carrey in <b>THE MASK</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		<b>THE GARAGE</b> Arabic Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 The movie: The Lion King will be shown at 5 p.m. every evening as well as extra shows on Fridays and Thursdays at 10:30		<b>CONCORD "1"</b> Sylvester Stallone - Sharon Stone in <b>THE SPECIALIST</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30 <b>CONCORD "2"</b> Harrison Ford - Whitney Houston — <b>THE BODYGUARD</b> Shows: 3, 5		SUM'A in the satirical play <b>HI CITIZEN</b> Composed and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaqfeh Daily from 8 p.m. Children's Play <b>The Ninja Turtles Show</b> Directed by Akram Abul Ragheb Daily at 10:30 p.m.		Presents <b>Abu Awwad</b> In the social comedy <b>Punctured Bag</b> The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day		Presents: <b>AL SALAM YA SALAM</b> at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed on Saturdays & Sundays	

## Overworked Sampras faces underdone Agassi today

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Andre Agassi will go into today's Australian Open final fresh as a daisy compared to defending champion Pete Sampras.

Agassi has breezed into the final, without dropping a set in six matches. He has played 150 games, 70 less than Sampras who has spent 14 hours and 20 minutes on court.

Sampras may feel he deserves the extra day's rest after needing five sets to overcome Magnus Larsson and Jim Courier plus four to beat Michael Chang in the semi-final.

Agassi's semi-final came a day after Sampras, but given the euphoric way he has progressed, spectators were wondering if Agassi was really affected. He even limited it had been like a practice workout.

Sampras has also been disheartened over the health of his coach Tim Gullikson, who collapsed here, went into hospital for tests, and flew home to Chicago for further diagnosis earlier this week.

Sampras believes this Australian Open is the most special of the Grand Slams. "This is the most special to me because of the circumstances and the fact that I was down and out against Larsson and down and out against Courier and I really fought back and showed more heart this week than I probably ever have, just refusing not to go down without a fight," he said.

"I think I've shown a lot of people that I might look kind of lackadaisical, but deep down inside I'm doing whatever I can to try to win."

Sampras serve will be his main weapon in his attempt to repeat his win over Agassi in the 1990 U.S. Open final.

"Whenever I play Andre, I really have to be at the top of my game to beat him, because he's got the best return of serves in the game," said Sampras.

Agassi has been trying to bring off doubts about his preparation for what could be a five-set decider.

Agassi said "I think the dynamics of the match are going to bring out the best in me."

"You can argue both sides; whether it's good to have a

tough match and then compromise your fitness or whether it's better to get through and be fresh and ready to play.

"I feel like I'm hitting the ball well and I feel good."

Sampras, two-time Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion and last year's winner here, is bidding for his sixth Grand Slam title. Agassi is chasing his third after his momentous wins at 1992 Wimbledon and last year's U.S. Open.

### Australian Open Centre Court flooded

The Australian Open's centre court looked like a giant wading pool as players splashed and danced with delight.

Minutes after Andre Agassi won his semifinal by default against injured Aaron Krickstein, a flash flood from the Yarra River swept over the court and caused a brief power failure in parts of the national tennis centre.

Astonished fans watched Natasha Zvereva, Gigi Fernandez, Lindsay Davenport and other players cavort barefoot in the ankle-deep water on the rubberised rebound ace court.

Corridors throughout the National Tennis Centre also flooded, along with the media room where at least 200 writers from around the world tried to file stories on the semifinal match.

When light was restored, an announcer, standing on centre court with his trousers rolled up to his knees, told fans: "Ladies and gentlemen, we have a slight problem with water."

His understatement was greeted with huge cheers.

Moments later, he returned to ask the thousands of fans present to clear the Centre Court stadium as a precaution.

A statement by tennis Australia President, Geoff Pollard, later said the flooding had been the result of overflow from the nearby Yarra and was "due to freak weather conditions."

"The flash flood meant that the water level exceeded the drainage capacity," Pollard said. "Flinders Park's drainage system is now clearing the water effectively. It will be business as usual tomorrow."

Fernandez and Zvereva had been beaten by Sanchez Vicario and Jana Novotna in the women's doubles final, which preceded Agassi's semifinal.

Fernandez wrestled in the water with Australian player Rennae Stubbs as the crowd cheered. Zvereva, carrying a toy kangaroo, danced happily. Known on the WTA Tour for her vivacious personality, Zvereva hammed it up before the cameras by striking model-like poses.

Agassi said he had been unable to see anything in the locker room after leaving the court when Krickstein defaulted with a groin injury.

"I couldn't see anything," said Agassi. "It was pitch black in the locker room."

The flooding brought back memories of Wimbledon in 1985, when water flooded walkways at the All England Club after a heavy rainstorm, also on the day of the men's semifinals.

### Sampras-Agassi record

Pete Sampras seven wins, Andre Agassi five wins.

Year	Venue	Round	Winner	Score
1989	Rome	R32	Agassi	6-2, 6-1
1990	Philadelphia	R16	Sampras	5-7, 7-5, retired
1990	U.S. Open	F	Sampras	6-4, 6-3, 6-2
1990	ATP Finals	RR	Agassi	6-4, 6-2
1991	ATP Finals	RR	Sampras	6-3, 1-6, 6-3
1992	Athens	F	Agassi	7-5, 6-4
1992	French Open	QF	Agassi	7-6, 6-2, 6-1
1993	Wimbledon	QF	Sampras	62, 61, 34, 34, 64
1994	Key Biscayne	F	Sampras	5-7, 6-3, 6-3
1994	Omsk	SF	Sampras	6-3, 6-1
1994	Paris Indoor	QF	Agassi	7-6, 7-5
1994	ATP Finals	SF	Sampras	4-6, 7-6, 6-3

## Australian Open Pierce destroys Sanchez to win 1st Grand Slam

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Mary Pierce brushed aside hot favourite Arantza Sanchez Vicario 6-3, 6-2 in the Australian Open women's final Saturday to take her first Grand Slam title.

The 20-year-old calmly dispelled doubts about her temperament in the 85 minute victory which gave France its first Grand Slam champion since Francoise Durr won the French Open in 1967.

"I am very very happy and I feel I have improved," Pierce said after getting revenge on the 23-year-old Spaniard for her two-set defeat in the French Open final last year.

Pierce, blasting the tough Spaniard off court with her finely placed forehand, hit so hard and wide that even Sanchez, one of the greatest retrievers, finally gave up trying to reach them.

Sanchez added that her serve had also let her down. Victory at Flinders Park would have secured her the world number one spot. But she will still take the top place next week as Steffi Graf is again injured for the Pan

Pacific tournament in Tokyo.

But Pierce also scored a notable victory over nerve in taking this Grand Slam title, worth \$360,000 and pushing her world ranking up to number three.

"I was very calm, focused and concentrated for every point," she said.

Sanchez, the French and U.S. Open champion, chased incessantly, but had no real answer to an opponent appropriately dubbed the Queen of Shots by the Press. Pierce stretched to the limit to slam the ball into the corners, often with the Spaniard stranded on the other side of the court.

Pierce said the Rebound Ace surface was one of her favourite as it was not too fast and the high bounce gave her time to set up shots.

Sanchez' weak service and faulty forehand kept her constantly on the defensive. The duel was fought mainly from the baseline and only four points were decided from the net in the second set.

Pierce said she had been a "little bit nervous" at the start and the final began ominously as she lost her service after she double faulted on the second and third points of the match.

"I wasn't serving too well I think the whole match," she said.

But Sanchez lost her serve in the second, failing with a backhand and Pierce broke through with a fierce forehand to the corner.

Sanchez took Pierce's service in the third and a tremendous battle erupted around deuce in the following game. "We had a lot of tough points in the beginning of the first set. These were really crucial for me to hang in there," said Pierce.

"It was important for me to just fight and not to give her any points."

The French player was hitting perfect shots, but Sanchez retrieved from seemingly impossible positions, flicking up the lob.

Retrieving however was just not enough on a day when Pierce made few mistakes and the French player levelled score at 2-2 after Sanchez Vicario netted a smash and then over-hit a



Mary Pierce holds the women's singles trophy during the awards ceremony at the Australian Open (AFP photo)

lofted forehand.

"I should have won that game and everything would be different," Sanchez Vicario said.

But Sanchez was stretching Pierce with deep backhands and in the seventh the French player was looking anguished, and mouthed "No, I can't" to her coach.

But in the eighth game Pierce broke Sanchez Vicario with cross-court forehands and a decisive smash, and took the set 6-4.

The second set opened with Pierce breaking through as she punished returns on her forehand forcing Sanchez Vicario into errors.

In the second game Pierce saw things going against her as one shot bounced tantalisingly high off the net and fell back, and a lofted forehand by Sanchez plumped down exactly on the baseline.

In the fourth Pierce reacted anxiously, crying out in anguish at lost points and slapping herself on the thigh.

The next game was very

tense with Pierce disputing a line call and arguing with the umpire. But Sanchez double faulted and Pierce took the game with a forehand passing shot to make it 3-2.

The fight was going out of the Spaniard and with Pierce's forehand rufing the court she was finding the net or overhitting.

With thunder rumbling ominously Pierce took the match and the title with a backhand which caught Sanchez out of position and raised her hands in triumph.

Then she stood for a long moment with her hands covering her face as if she could not believe her success.

Sanchez denied she had been praying for a rain break at the end.

"I knew the weather was getting close to rain but I didn't pray," she said.

The Spaniard laid her defeat to not serving well and said that Pierce was a stronger all round player than Graf because she could hit hard from both sides.



Mary Pierce of France (left) and Spaniard Arantza Sanchez-Vicario kiss at the conclusion of the women's singles title at the Australian Open (AFP photo)

## Cantona to be dropped from French squad

PARIS (Agencies) — The French national soccer team had been struggling anyway, now, with Eric Cantona's suspension added to Jean-Pierre Papin's knee injury, younger players face an "interesting challenge," the coach admitted Friday.

"To lose Papin and Cantona in the space of 24 hours is tough for a coach," said Aime Jacquet. "It's especially tough because we were in the process of changing our style of play, and now I have to reconsider."

Jacquet commented after the announcement that Manchester United had suspended Cantona for the rest of the English season because of his hazy attack on a heckling fan Wednesday night. Papin, along with Cantona one of France's top scorers of recent years, underwent knee surgery this week and will be out at least eight weeks.

French officials said Cantona would be ousted as captain of the duration of his suspension in England.

That means he will miss France's European Championship qualifying matches away against Israel on March 29 and at home against Slovakia on April 26. France needs victories in both matches to retain a reasonable chance of qualifying for the championship round in 1996.

Jacquet refused to de-

clarify. "Life goes on for the team, and Eric's absence represents an interesting challenge for a lot of players who now have a chance to prove themselves."



Russia's ladies 4x5km relay team with (from left) Olga Korotkova, Nina Gavriljuka, Larisa Lazutina and Yelena Valbe celebrate on the podium after winning the Nordic Ski World Cup (AFP photo)

## Injured Valbe loses 1st race of season

LAHTI, Finland (R) — Russia's Elena Valbe, suffering from back trouble, lost her first World Cup cross-country race of the season on Saturday — beaten by more than a minute by Norwegian Inger Helene Nybraten.

Valbe, first in her last six outings, finished 15th in the women's 10-km classical

event but remained well ahead in the overall standings.

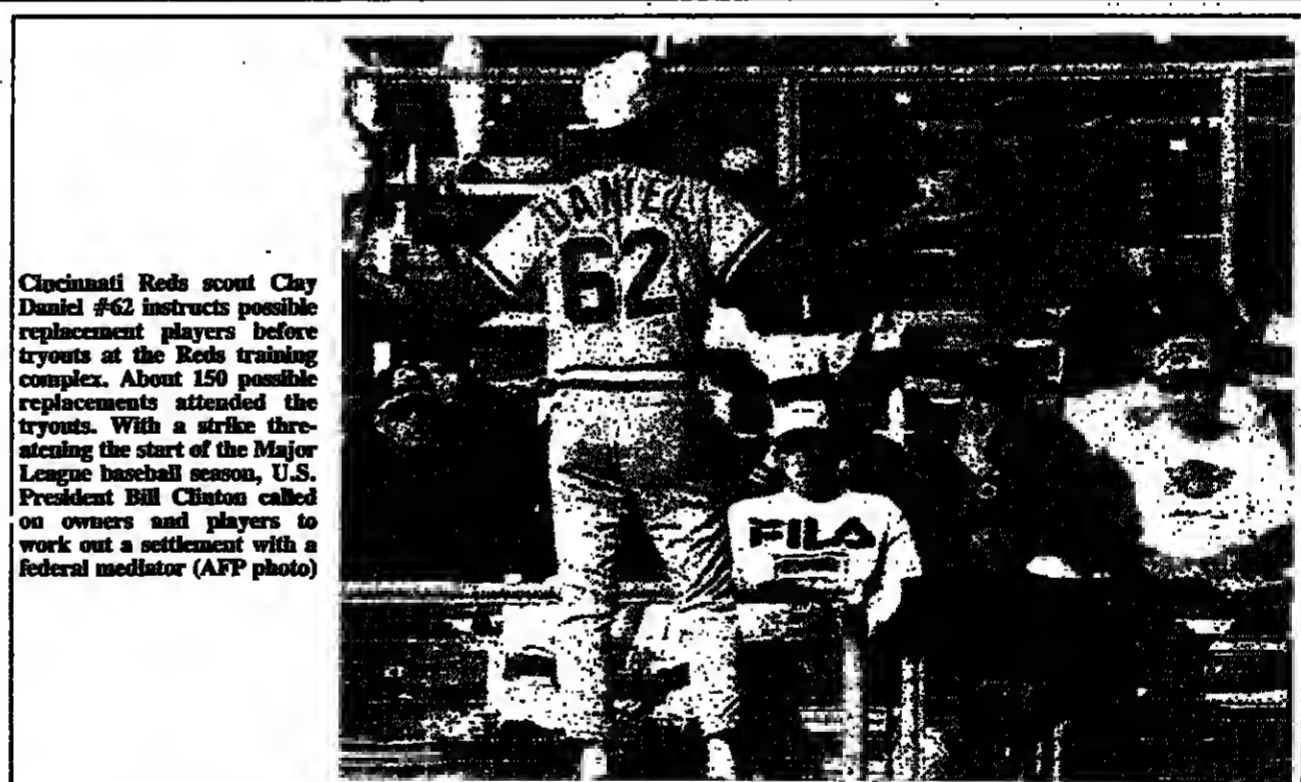
"I've had backache for a few days and could not give everything. It is as simple as that," said Valbe.

Valbe has 616 points after seven races, 126 more than compatriot Nina Gavriljuk, fourth on Saturday and

second overall. Nybraten is sixth on 209.

In the men's ski jumping, Austria's Andreas Goldberger extended his lead in the world cup standings by winning the normal hill event ahead of Germany's Jens Weissflog.

Goldberger has 972 points after 12 events with Finnish jumper Janne Ahonen next on 666.



Cincinnati Reds scout Clay Daniel #62 instructs possible replacement players before tryouts at the Reds training complex. About 150 possible replacements attended the tryouts. With a strike threatening the start of the Major League baseball season, U.S. President Bill Clinton called on owners and players to work out a settlement with a federal mediator (AFP photo)

### Main Uddin s/o Ali Noor PASSPORT LOST

On 25/12/94 I discovered the loss of my passport which bears the No. E854287 of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. If the above passport has been found, please contact me at Tel. 891890 Amman and we shall pay a reward accordingly.

### GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANMAN HIRSH  
© 1994 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**THE GROSVENOR COUP**

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

**NORTH**  
♠ K J 9 4 2  
♥ K Q 4  
♦ J 9 2  
♣ 8 3

**EAST**  
♠ A Q  
♥ 7 9  
♦ A 10 9 3  
♣ 10 8 5 4 2

**SOUTH**  
♠ 10 8 7 5  
♥ A 9 5  
♦ K Q 3  
♣ K Q J

The bidding:  
South West North East  
1 NT Pass 2 ♣ Pass  
2 ♣ Pass 3 NT Pass  
4 ♣ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♣

There's a play known as the Grosvenor Gambit which is so spectacularly illogical that it gives declarer a chance to bring home an otherwise unmakeable contract. However, it is such a terrible play that no one can believe you made it and so won't take advantage of the situation. Here's an example of the ruse.

North's two hearts was a transfer to spades and the raise to three no trump showed a balanced game-going hand with five spades. Despite a flat hand, South correctly converted to four spades.

West led a heart. Declarer took the ace in hand and ran the ten of spades. East won with the ace (I and shifted to a club to West's ace. Back came a club.

Declarer won and could now have made the contract by leading a spade to the king. However, when West followed to the next round of spades, would you make that play? Not a chance! You could never live down the embarrassment of having East show out, as expected. Naturally, declarer tried a second spade finesse and parity was restored — down one.

What is the purpose of the Grosvenor Gambit? As declarer, you feel silly when a defender indulges in such tomfoolery. What the defender is hoping for is that, in subsequent play, you will be nonplussed every time you recall how you were tormented by the grinning defender and not play your best, giving your opponents an edge. Could be!

## JOB VACANCY

C.C.C. Jordan advertises for the existing vacancy in the senior position of the executive secretary to the Group General Manager, located in Amman. The successful applicant will be charge of the G.G.M.'s office and reports to him directly. She will be expected to assist the G.G.M. in performing office and administrative work related to the construction management and project activities of C.C.C. both in Jordan and other middle eastern areas. Duties include the preparation of high quality written communications, marketing proposals. Presentations, agreements, top, level reports and minutes of meeting. This requires the job holder to be highly qualified in using a P.C. and various types of specialised soft ware and printers for processing, storing and retrieving such work.

Applicants are expected to be in the 30-45 years age group, must have a professional degree of at least two years academic studies after a high school, with at least 10 years in a similar position of responsibility should have a high proficiency in both the Arabic and English languages and demonstrate adequate organisation and supervisory capability.

Interested persons may apply in writing to fax No.: 643073 Amman. All applications will be treated in strict confidence.

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Italian businessmen meet Iraqi officials

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A delegation of Italian businessmen began talks with senior Iraqi officials here Saturday on prospects for future contracts. Iraqi officials said the delegation, representing 38 Italian industrial and trading companies, met Trade Minister Mohammed Mehdi Saleh and Health Minister Umud Medhat Mubarak. Sergio Marini, president of the Arab-Italian Chamber of Commerce, led the delegation. The businessmen were to discuss prospects for supplying Iraq with food and medicine, which are excluded from the trade embargo imposed on Baghdad after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, said Adnan Al Qadassy, president of the Iraqi federation of industrialists.

## Turkish radical released from French prison

PARIS (AP) — French authorities have released a leader of the Turkish radical group Dev Sol, a movement suspected of several slayings in Turkey, but ordered him not to leave France. Dursun Karatas, 41, had been jailed since last September when he was arrested entering France on a forged Dutch passport. Mr. Karatas was charged with illegal entry to France, possessing forged documents and stolen goods, and for contact with "terrorist" groups. He is wanted on several arrest warrants in Turkey.

## Teledyne fined \$11m for Iraq deals

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The U.S. government slapped over \$11 million in fines on California-based defence manufacturer Teledyne Industries Inc. this week for exporting banned materials that ended up in Iraqi cluster bombs. A district judge here fined Teledyne nearly \$5.5 million Friday after the company pleaded guilty to violating the Arms Export Control Act and other charges with the export of zirconium pellets to Iraq via third countries. Also on Friday, the Commerce Bureau of Export Administration imposed a \$2 million civil penalty on the firm and announced that the Teledyne Wah Chang division will lose export privileges for three months. On Thursday a federal court in Miami fined Teledyne nearly \$4 million to settle charges of illegally exporting weapons grade zirconium pellets to a Chilean company that sold cluster bombs to Iraq in the 1980s.

## Cyprus legalises homosexuality

NICOSIA (AFP) — The Cyprus government has approved a bill decriminalising homosexual activity in private between consenting adults, a spokesman said Saturday. The bill, which has to be ratified by the parliamentary legal affairs committee before it becomes law, replaces a former law which made homosexual relations a criminal offence. Gay rights campaigners welcomed the government's move which comes almost two years after the European Court of Human Rights found the island's law a violation of their human rights. "I am pleased because the government is finally trying to implement the European Court's decision," campaigner Alecos Modinos told the daily Cyprus Mail on Saturday. "The government has consistently resisted changing the colonial anti-gay law because of public opinion and prejudice against homosexuals," the English-language newspaper wrote.

## Moroccan union threatens Air Maroc action

RABAT (R) — The union representing workers of the Moroccan airline Royal Air Maroc (RAM) threatened legal action against the state-owned company on Saturday unless a financial scandal over missing funds was made public. The government launched an investigation this week into the troubled airline's finances without giving a reason. A spokesman for RAM at its Casablanca headquarters on Friday confirmed an inquiry was in progress but refused to comment on press reports that up to 150 million dirhams (\$17 million) were missing from the company's books. The spokesman was unavailable for comment on Saturday and there was no reply from the office of Prime Minister Abdul Latif Filali, who ordered the Finance Ministry to launch the inquiry. "The personnel at RAM refuse to be the bearers of bad tidings nor victims of the dishonest and destructive behaviour of some irresponsible. As for our rights, we will know how to defend them by the appropriate legal means," the union said in a letter published by Liberation newspaper.

## U.S. soldiers land in Kenya

MOMBASA, Kenya (R) — U.S. troops began arriving in the Kenyan port of Mombasa on Saturday to take part in Operation United Shield to help United Nations peacekeepers pull out of Somalia. Witnesses said 138 U.S. troops were aboard two C-141 transport planes while another 22 flew in on three Starliners. Neither the soldiers nor the U.S. liaison office at Moi international airport in Mombasa spoke to reporters. On Thursday, senior U.S. officials said they had won pledges from Somalia's main warlords not to attack U.S.-led task force which will shield the withdrawal of some 9,000 U.N. troops from the Horn of Africa country by the end of March. But they said if the warlords failed to keep their word or could not control other militias in Somalia, the multi-national force would have the firepower to respond to "any eventuality."

## Iran wants Israel pressured to sign NPT

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Saturday called for Israel to be pressured into signing the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the official Iranian news agency IRNA said. "We call on the signatories of the NPT to pressure Israel into signing the treaty," Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi said, quoted by IRNA. Israel, widely believed to possess nuclear weapons though it has never acknowledged it, has refused to sign the treaty on the grounds it has a "special" status in the Middle East. Iran urged Middle East countries earlier this month to pressure Israel to destroy its nuclear arsenal. Mr. Mohammadi said his country favored a peaceful use of nuclear science but opposed production of weapons of mass destruction. The United States and Israel have accused Iran of seeking to procure nuclear arms.

## Geagea interrogation to start on Feb. 10

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanese Christian farmer warlord Samir Geagea and two other defendants charged with the murder of a rival leader Dany Chamoun will start testifying on Feb. 10, a court here announced Saturday. Mr. Geagea is accused of killing Chamoun, his wife and two sons in 1990. He is also charged with other defendants with the February 1994 bombing of a church near Beirut, which claimed 11 lives. Presiding Judge Philippe Khairallah last week announced that testimonies on the church case would be heard on February 3. Mr. Geagea, who could face death penalty in both cases, is the only militia chief among those who fought Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war to be brought to trial. He has been held for nine months in a defence ministry basement.

## Turkey asks Greece to free detainees

ANKARA (R) — Turkey on Saturday asked Athens to release a Muslim clergyman jailed for 10 months for assuming the title of mufti (religious leader) of a Muslim minority community in northeast Greece. "President Suleyman Demirel sent a message today to Greek President Constantine Karamanlis to express his disappointment that Xanthi's mufti Mehmet Emin Aga was sentenced to prison for carrying out his religious duties," Mr. Demirel's office said. "He (has) requested that Karamanlis be instrumental in the release of mufti Mehmet Emin Aga," it said. Greece does not recognise Mr. Aga as the mufti of the area which has an officially sanctioned religious leader. Mr. Aga was convicted last week for signing as mufti for the district of Xanthi in letters sent in 1993.

## Banks asked to raise capital to JD 20m

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) has asked all commercial banks operating in the Kingdom to raise their capital to JD 20 million before the end of 1996, CBJ Governor Mohammad Nabulsi said Saturday.

Dr. Nabulsi also confirmed that the CBJ had adopted a new policy of strictly enforcing its limitations on commercial banks' credit to individual accounts or companies in proportion to the capital and reserves of the concerned bank under new CBJ guidelines.

The CBJ governor, in an interview with the Jordan Times, said the Central Bank had already issued instructions to all commercial banks in Jordan to raise their capital to JD 20 million.

"They have until the end of 1996 to raise the capital as instructed," Dr. Nabulsi said. He noted that most of the commercial banks in Jordan had already raised their capital to JD 10 million although the CBJ regulations require only JD 5 million.

Maintaining a capital level of JD 10 million enables all banks to meet the require-

ments of the International Bank for Settlements, which is a key authority in settling inter-bank disputes of an international nature and assessing the international standing of commercial banks.

Banking sources said Jordan's commercial banks, a dominant sector in the Amman Financial Market (AFM) where liquidity for fresh equity is easy to find, would not find it difficult to raise the capital as sought by the Central Bank.

The actual impact on the stock market of the drainage of capital, albeit for a limited period, will depend on the options available to the banks.

"Some banks have reserves and other provisions which would help them to meet at least part of the called-for raise in capital," noted a market analyst. "Some of the banks which already used such means to raise capital in the last two years will have to find new funds."

But if the funds are raised from the present capital available at the AFM, then the market will face a decline, said the analyst. "Indeed, the money will be rechannelled into the market when the fresh shares come to the trading floor, but prices could go down in the



Mohammad Nabulsi

interim."

That being one side of the argument, the other side is that the government does not base its policies on AFM fluctuations. "If anything, the stock market is not a productive sector of the economy in government terms," noted the analyst.

Some of the smaller banks which will have difficulty in raising the capital to JD 20 million have the option of mergers that would also boost their equity value in the market.

On enforcing the CBJ's

standing guidelines to commercial banks to ensure that they remain within the credit limitations ordered by the Central Bank, Dr. Nabulsi said: "The regulations were there for a long time, but there have also been many violations."

"As such, heavily penalising violators is the only way we could find to enforce the regulations."

Earlier, the banks were allowed to lend up to 25 per cent of their respective capital and reserves to an individual account or company and any lending beyond this limit should have prior approval from the Central Bank.

The banks have two months to ensure that their outstanding credit facilities comply with the CBJ instructions.

The new CBJ regulations bring down the limit to 10 per cent.

Dr. Nabulsi said while the Central Bank always had the standing guidelines to the commercial banks, "We are now strictly enforcing the regulations."

The Central Bank's approach to the problem, he said, involved asking the violator bank to raise its reserves with the Central Bank by an amount equal to the

unauthorised credit.

This would mean that a bank with a JD 10 million capital could extend credit of JD 1 million to an individual account or company. If the account or company, if the bank extends credit beyond this limit without explicit CBJ permission, say by JD 500,000, then the bank will be asked to deposit an equivalent amount to its reserves with the Central Bank.

Dr. Nabulsi did not specifically name any company or bank that were found to have violated the standing regulations and thus prompted the strict enforcement of the guidelines by the CBJ.

But it appeared that a recent episode of credit involving up to JD 35 million granted by one of Jordan's leading commercial banks to a single business group and an ensuing legal wrangle appeared to have nudged the Central Bank to adopt strict action.

For some time late last year, the affair seemed to be turning to a draw-out legal battle in court before the two sides announced a compromise and that they had reached an out-of-court settlement. But the sheer size of the amount involved shook the Kingdom's entire banking community.

## COLUMN

## 3 children sacrificed to appease goddess

NEW DEHLI (AFP)

Three children aged between two and five were murdered at a Hindu temple in western India in a ritual sacrifice to appease the local deity, police said Saturday. Temple priest in the district of Surashtra, Nagar found the bodies of the two boys and girl when he opened the shrine Friday, domestic news agencies said. They were killed Thursday night at the temple to the goddess Mele after elaborate rituals to appease the goddess, the reports said. Police recovered blood-stained butcher's knife from the temple and launched an investigation. The children were not identified and no suspects were mentioned. Child sacrifices are common occurrence in India stemming from a superstitious belief that the offer of human blood would lead to divine blessings. Most are carried out to appease various incarnations of the goddess Kali in her role as fertility divinity.

## Republican calls lawmaker a 'fag'

WASHINGTON (AFP) —

The number two Republican in the U.S. House of Representatives claimed Friday that his tongue slipped when he called gay lawmaker Barney Frank "Barney Fag" in an interview with reporters. House Majority Leader Dick Armey said he was having "trouble with alliteration" and immediately apologised to Mr. Frank, who is an acknowledged homosexual. Mr. Frank said he understood the remark was not intentional. "But I could not accept that it was wholly accidental. I just had to believe that it was somewhere in the back of his mind," Mr. Frank, a Massachusetts Democrat, said after listening to a tape of the interview. Fellow Democrats were outraged at the remark which they said reflected the Republicans' true views and White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry said it was an example of the type of "extreme language" that was undermining political discourse. "This Republican leadership seems to have a habit of calling their political opponents names," said Democrat John Lewis from Georgia. "Mr. Armey is too damn careless with his mouth," said Democrat Nita Lowery from New York. Mr. Armey stated that he did not want Mr. Frank to "believe for one moment I would use a slur against him. I had trouble with alliteration. I was stumbling, mumbling... Barney Frank is a friend of mine. I don't use the word in personal conversation. I would not use such an expression and I don't approve of anyone who does this," he said. The Human Rights Campaign Fund, the largest U.S. gay rights lobby, issued a statement in which it branded the remark as "prejudicial" and "dishonours the dignity of the Congress and shows a callous disregard for the responsibilities that accompany high public office."

## British baby dies of thirst

LONDON (R) — An 18-

month-old boy died of thirst and lay undiscovered amid unwrapped Christmas presents after both his parents died from an apparent drug overdose, an inquest was told Friday. Neighbours found the body of Michael Walker after they broke into the family's apartment in Rhyl, north Wales. The corpse of his parents Tony and Elizabeth, both in their 20s, were discovered nearby. The family had not been seen since before Christmas. "The bodies were in some state of putrefaction and decay, and there was evidence at the scene of probable drug abuse," detective Sergeant Philip Welsh told the inquest. "Syringes were scattered about the floor. There were powders and items we would usually associate with the drugs scene." A post-mortem examination revealed the toddler had died of cardiac respiratory failure due to dehydration. Coroner David Jones adjourned the inquest pending results of further forensic tests to determine the cause of death of his parents.

## 18 dead in bloodiest day of Egyptian violence

MINYA (Agencies) —

Security forces Saturday shot dead 14 militants in southern Egypt while gunmen killed four people on the bloodiest day of clashes for three years.

Police said 12 of the militants were killed after security forces surrounded an abandoned marble quarry at dawn in the eastern desert near the Nile city of Minya, which is 250 kilometres south of Cairo.

"They opened fire after they were ordered to surrender. Police fired back in a gunbattle that lasted seven hours," a policeman said. The militants were members of the outlawed Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group), four of them from Minya.

Police discovered a haul of 11 pistols, a Russian-made assault rifle, nine petrol bombs, four explosive devices and 12 detonators, as well as blankets and food in the quarry which served as a militant hideout.

Two other militants, two civilians and two policemen were also killed in unrest elsewhere in southern Egypt, police said.

Several militants opened fire with automatic weapons at a police van outside a hospital in Nagaa Hamadi, 640 kilometres south of Cairo, killing two policemen as well as a man and a woman, police said. The gunmen fled after also

wounding three policemen and three other civilians.

Security forces later shot dead two militants in the train station at Sohag, 250 kilometres south of Minya, police said. They said the militants had opened fire as officers tried to arrest them.

They added that the militants — who arrived on a train from Nagaa Hamadi — could have been involved in the earlier attack on the police van there.

Police also arrested Hassan Hussein, a regional leader of the Gamaa, in Nagaa Hamadi. The deaths bring the total killed this month to 81, resulting from intensified battles in southern Egypt between police and militants who are trying to topple the secular government and install Islamic rule.

On Wednesday, Egypt's annual police day, both President Hosni Mubarak and Interior Minister Hassan Al Ali made tough statements promising to pursue the radicals who have been battling the government for nearly three years.

January's death toll is the highest for any month during the insurgency.

In the Nagaa Hamadi attack, radicals opened fire on three unarmed police outside a hospital, killing two of them and two passersby, including a woman.

## Kabul coup aborted

KABUL (AFP) — A planned

coup by two former Hezb-e-Islami commanders against forces loyal to Afghan President Burhamuddin Rabbani north of Kabul was aborted in a preemptive strike Saturday, a senior official told AFP.

"We had information that these two commanders were part of a big plan in which Hezb-e-Islami would try to grab everything between Kabul and the Salang," said Defence Ministry spokesman Abdullah.

Two former Hezb-e-Islami commanders, Karim Khan and Agia Shirin Salangi, who had changed to Mr. Rabbani's side much earlier, were to switch sides once again and capture Bagram airbase and the town of Charikar, Mr. Abdullah told AFP.

Learning of the plan, Mr. Rabbani's topgun, ex-Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud, launched a preemptive strike before dawn Saturday.

He said if the rebels had succeeded the plan was for ex-communist General Abdul Rashid Dostum to attack the Salang Pass north of Charikar, while Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami fighters were to attack Kabul from the east.

## Algerian legislator killed amid Ramadan threats

ALGERIERS (Agencies) — A

leading member of Algeria's transitional parliament, Moussa Moghni, has been killed, security services said Saturday without giving further details.

Moghni, deputy chairman of the finance and budget commission on the National Transitional Council (CNT), was also chairman of a political party, the Rally for National Unity.

He was the third member of the CNT to be killed, following the murders of Salah Mour on Jan. 15 and of Mohamed Kaci Abdullah last August.

In another incident, gunmen abducted a young Algerian woman and her three teenage brothers and later dumped their bodies far from their home, police said.

A security announcement carried by the official agency APS said all four were seized on Tuesday from their family home in Al Kamilia town, 155 kilometres southeast of the Algerian capital. Their bodies were found in western Algeria.

APS named the woman as unemployed Fadila Zoubar, 24. The brothers were identified as Ahmad, also unemployed, Kamel, 15, and Mahfoud, 13, both teenagers at school. The report did not indicate

how they were killed or precisely where their bodies had been found. Slitting the throat of a kidnap victim is the method preferred by the guerrillas.

Guerrillas battling the army-backed government in Algeria have in the past kidnapped girls as young as 15 for "pleasure marriage," a temporary union for a specified period. Girls refusing proposals of such marriage to guerrillas on the run have often been killed.

The militants, whose principal objective is to turn Algeria into a purist Islamic state, have also targeted teenagers ignoring a schools boycott ordered by fundamentalist leaders.

The armed groups have also singled out members of the CNT and the National Consultative Council as targets, describing them as "usurpers" following the annulment of a parliamentary poll in January 1992 that the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

More than 20,000 people have died in the insurgency. Mr. Moghni was the brother of a leading fundamentalist imam, Abdul Kader Moghni, who preaches in the working-class Bab Al Oued district of Algiers and is an associate of FIS deputy leader Ali Belhadj.

## Three sentenced to death in Morocco on terrorism charge

FEZ, Morocco (R) — A

Moroccan court sentenced three men, two of them French nationals, to death on Saturday for "acts of terrorism" including an attack on a hotel last year in which two Spanish tourists were killed.

The three, Hamel Marzouk, Redouane Hammadi and Stephane Ait Idir, are of Algerian origin. Marzouk and Ait Idir, a former fighter in Afghanistan, are French nationals.

They heard their sentences quietly then laughed and chatted with lawyers before being led away by security men wearing bullet-proof vests amid some of the tightest security seen in the ancient central city of Fez.

The three were among 17 men and one woman, all of Moroccan or Algerian origin, arrested after the attacks in 1993 and 1994 in the Moroccan cities of Fez, Marrakesh, Oujda and Casablanca.

Two Spaniards, a man and a woman, died when attackers fired into the lobby of the Asni hotel in Marrakesh in August 1994.

Defence Lawyer Abdul Salam Chaouche told Reuters he would lodge an appeal at the supreme court in Rabat on Monday.

Chaouche, a vocal human rights activist, said the death sentences were unjustified on legal grounds. He said Mr. Marzouk, accused of the attack against McDonald's restaurant in Casablanca in which a guard was wounded,

did not deserve to die.

"It is not justice to condemn a young man to death for shooting at a wall," Mr. Chaouche said. "The verdict goes against the Moroccan government's supposed human rights reforms."

Another French national, Kamal Benachba, was sentenced to life in prison along with two other accused. The woman, 19-year-old Naïma Aziz, was given a six-month suspended sentence and fined.

The other 11 accused men were sentenced to prison terms ranging from six months to 10 years after a marathon court session lasting more than 12 hours.

The charges included armed robbery, premeditated and attempted murder and creation of a criminal gang. The death sentence is rarely carried out in Morocco. The last execution in 1993 was the first in 20 years.

Some of the men spoke very little Arabic and proceedings were often halted because lawyers complained the translations were inaccurate. A new translator was brought in.

Two of them testified during the trial which opened on Jan. 10 that they were lured to Morocco thinking they were going to open a garage then found they had been sent cars filled with arms and ammunition, some of them destined for neighbouring Algeria.

Ait Idir, 22, and Hamma-

## Arrests top 3,100 in Bahrain — opposition

TEHRAN (AFP) — The

number of people arrested in more than a month of anti-government protests in Bahrain has reached 3,100, the exiled Bahraini opposition said Saturday.

A total of 150 people have also been injured in clashes between security forces and demonstrators, 11 of whom are in a coma, since the onset of violence in mid-December, a spokesman for the Islamic Front for Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) said.

Clashes erupted in Bahrain after the arrest on Dec. 5 of leading Shiite Muslim cleric Sheikh Ali Salman. He had asked for the restoration of parliament, suspended since 1975.

Sheikh Ali has since been freed and deported to United Arab Emirates, from where he travelled to London and asked for political asylum.

The opposition says 17 people have been killed in clashes between the police and demonstrators, while the authorities have only reported the death of one policeman.

The IFLB spokesman added that the situation of prisoners arrested in Bahrain was "grave and worrisome" because they were denied proper medical care and the right to have an attorney.

The group charged Thursday that a number of prisoners had died under torture. There was no independent confirmation of the opposition reports.

The trouble is the worst in

Bahrain since the former British protectorate gained independence in 1971.

Protests erupted in two villages in Bahrain Friday after the burial of a man shot dead by security forces, the exiled opposition said.

The Interior Ministry delivered a tough warning to "troublemakers" it said were trying to destabilise the situation, but added that the situation was "under control," in a statement carried by the official Bahraini news agency GNA.

Opposition activists in the Gulf contacted by telephone said trouble broke out after Friday prayers in Sitra, southeast of the capital Manama, where 24-year-old Hussein Ali Al Safi was shot dead Thursday, and in Bani Jamrah, northwest of Manama, where another victim of the clashes was buried Thursday.

Supporters of the London-based Movement for the Liberation of Bahrain said Safi died when security forces fired live bullets, rubber bullets and tear-gas at demonstrators late Thursday who were demanding restoration of the constitution suspended in 1975.

Abdul Redha Mansur Al Hajji, 30, died of serious wounds sustained in clashes with police 10 days ago and was buried in Bani Jamrah Thursday, said a statement from the opposition movement received by AFP.

There was no independent confirmation of the opposition reports.